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Catholick Unity:

OR

The only way to bring us all to be of one Religion.

By *Rich. Baxter.*

To be read by such as are offended at the differences in Religion, and are willing to do their part to heal them.

JAMES 3. 17.

But the Wisdom that is from above, is first Pure, then Peaceable, Gentle, easie to be intreated, &c.

London, Printed by *R. W.* for *Thomas Underhill* and *Francis Tyton,* and are to be sold at the sign of the Anchor and Bible in *Pauls* Churchyard; and at the three Daggers in *Fleet-street.* 1660.

To all those in the several Parishes of these Nations, that complain of the disagreements in matters of Religion.

Men and Brethren,

AS in the midst of all the *impiety* and *dishonesty* of the world, it is some comfort to us, that yet the *Names* of *Pi-*

ety and *Honeſty* are ſtill in credit, and *ungodlineſs* and *diſhoneſty* are terms of diſgrace; ſo that thoſe that will be ungodly and diſhoneſt, are fain to uſe the Mask and Vail of better names, to hide their wickedneſs; ſo alſo it is *ſome* comfort to us, in the midſt of the *uncharitableneſs* and *diſcords* of this age, that yet the *Names* of *Love* and *Concord* ſound ſo well, and are honoured by thoſe that are furtheſt from the *Things*: For thus we ſeem agreed in the main cauſe, and have this advantage in our debates, that whatever ſhall be proved to be againſt Love, and Unity, and Peace, we are all of us obliged by our profeſſions to diſown. I may

ſuppoſe

ſuppoſe that all that read theſe words, will ſpeak againſt the uncharitableneſs, and contentions, and diviſions of the preſent times as well as I. Doth it grieve my ſoul to hear profeſſed Chriſtians ſo cenſoriouſly condemning, and paſſionately reviling one another; while they are proudly juſtifying themſelves? I ſuppoſe you'l ſay, It grieves you alſo? Do I mourn in ſecret, to ſee ſo many diviſions and ſubdiviſions? and Church ſet up againſt Church, and Paſtors againſt Paſtors, in the ſame Pariſhes; and each party labouring to diſgrace the other and their way, that they may promote their own? I ſuppoſe you will ſay, You do

ſo too. Do I lament it as the Nations ſhame, that in Religion men are of ſo many minds, and manage their differences ſo unpeaceably, that it is become the ſtumbling block to the ungodly, the grief of our friends, and the deriſion of our enemies? I know you will ſay, that this alſo is your lamentation. And is it not a wonder indeed, that ſuch a miſery ſhould be continued, which all men are againſt; and which cannot be continued but by our wilfull choice? Is it not ſtrange that we are ſo long without ſo great a bleſſing as *Unity* and *Peace*, while all men ſay they love it, and deſire it, and while we may have it if we will? But

the

the cauſe is evident: while men love *Unity*, they hate the *Holineſs* in which we muſt *Unite*: While they love *Peace*, they hate the neceſſary means by which it muſt be obtained and maintained: The way of Peace they have not known; or knowing it, they do abhor it. As well as they love *Unity* and *Peace*, they love the *Cauſes* of diſcord and diviſion much better. The drunkard, and whore-monger, and worldling ſay they love the ſalvation of their ſouls: But yet while they love and keep their ſins, they will miſs of the ſalvation which they ſay they love. And ſo while men love their *ungodlineſs* and *dividing* wayes, we are little the

better for their love of *peace*. If men love *Health*, and yet love *Poyson*, and hate both medicine and wholsom food, they may miss of health, notwithstanding they love it.

Where know you a Parish in *England*, that hath no disagreements in matters of Religion? In this Parish where I live, we have not several Congregations, nor are we divided into such parties as in many other places; But we have here the great division: some are for Heaven, and some for Earth: some love a holy diligent life, and others hate it: some pray in their Families, and teath them the word and fear of God, and others do not: some

spend

ſpend the Lords Day in holy exerciſes, and others ſpend much of it in idleneſs and vanity: ſome take the ſervice of God for their delight; and others are weary of it; and live in ignorance, becauſe they will not be at the pains to learn. Some make it the principal care and buſineſs of their lives, to prepare for death, and make ſure of everlaſting life; and others will venture their ſouls on the wrath of God, and cheat themſelves by their own preſumption, rather then be at this ſweet and neceſſary labour to be ſaved. Some hate ſin, and make it their dayly work to root out the relicts of it from their hearts and

lives: and others love it and will not leave it, but hate those that reprove them, and endeavour their salvation.

And as long as this great division is unhealed, what other means can bring us to any happy Unity? It would make a mans heart bleed to consider of the folly of the ungodly rout, that think it would be a happy Union, if we could all agree to read one form of prayer, while some love, and others hate the holiness which they pray for: and if we could all agree to use the sign of the Cross in Baptism, while one half either understand not the Baptismall Covenant, or wilfully violate it, and neglect, or hate, and scorn that mortified

holy

holy life, which by that ſolemn Vow and Covenant they are engaged to. They are ſolicitous to bring us all to unity in the geſture of receiving the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, while ſome take Chriſt and life, and others take their own damnation. When they ſhould firſt agree in being all the faithfull ſervants of one Maſter, they make a great matter of it, that the ſervants of Chriſt, and of the Devil may uſe the ſame bodily poſture in that worſhip where their hearts are as different as ſpirit and fleſh. Poor people think that it is the want of Uniformity in certain Ceremonies of mans invention, that is the cauſe of our

great

great divisions and distractions; When, alas, it is the want of unity in matters of greater consequence, even of Faith, and Love, and Holiness, as I have here shewed. If once we were all children of one Father, and living members of one Christ, and all renewed by one sanctifying Spirit, and aimed at one end, and walked by one Rule (the word of God,) and had that special Love to one another which Christ hath made the mark of his Disciples, this were an Agreement to be rejoyced in indeed, which would hold us together in the most comfortable relations, and assure us that we shall live together with Christ in everlasting blef-

bleſſedneſs. But, alas, if our Agreement be no better, then to ſit together in the ſame ſeats, and ſay the ſame words, and uſe the ſame geſtures and Ceremonies, our *hearts* will be ſtill diſtant from each other, our *natures* will be contrary, and the *malignity* of ungodly hearts will be breaking out on all occaſions. And as now you hear men ſcorning at the practice of that Religion which themſelves profeſs, ſo if God prevent it not, you may ſhortly ſee another War take off their reſtraint and let them looſe, and then they will ſeek the blood of thoſe that now they ſeem to be agreed with. At furtheſt we are ſure, that very ſhortly

we

we ſhall be ſeparated as far as Heaven and Hell, if there be not now a nearer agreement then in words and outward Shews and Ceremonies.

It being then paſt doubt, that there is no happy laſting Unity, but in the Spirit and a holy life, What hindereth us from ſo ſafe, ſo ſweet, ſo ſure a Peace? Why might not all our Pariſhes agree on ſuch neceſſary, honourable and reaſonable terms? Why is there in moſt places, but here and there a Perſon, or a Family, that will yield to the terms of an everlaſting peace, & live as men that believe they have a God to ſerve and pleaſe, and immortall ſouls to ſave or loſe? Is not God willing that

all

all ſhould be ſaved, and come to the knowledge of the truth, 1 *Tim.* 2. 4. and that all ſhould agree in ſo ſafe a path? Why then doth he invite all, and tender them his ſaving mercy, and ſend his meſſengers to command and importune them to this holy Concord? He would take them all into the bond of his Covenant: How oft would Chriſt have gathered all the Children of *Jeruſalem* to him, as the Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings? but it was they that *would not*, *Mat.* 23. 37. He would have the Goſpel preached to every creature, *Mar.* 16. 15, 16. & would have the Kingdoms of the world become the Kingdoms of

the

the Lord and of his Christ.

What then is the cause of this sad division in our Parishes? Are Ministers unwilling that their people should all agree in holiness? No, it would be the greatest favor you could do them, and the greatest joy that you could bring to their hearts: They would be gladder to see such a blessed Unity, then if you gave them all that you have in the world. O how a poor Minister would boast and glory of such a Parish! He would bless the day that ever he came among them; and that ever he was called to the Ministry; and that ever he was born into the world for their sakes. How easie would all his studies and

labours

labours be, if they were but ſweetned with ſuch ſucceſs? How eaſily could he bear his ſcorns, and threatnings, and abuſes, and perſecutions from others, if he ſaw but ſuch a holy Unity among his people to encourage him? So far are your Teachers from excluding you from this happineſs, that it is the end of their ſtudies, & preaching, & prayers, yea and of their lives, to bring you to partake of it. And glad would they be to preach to you, and exhort you, in hunger and thirſt, in cold and nakedneſs, in all the contempt and deriſion of the world, if thereby they could but bring their pariſhes to agree in a life of faith and holineſs.

And

And ſure our difference is not becauſe the godly will not admit you to joyn with them in the waies of God; For they cannot hinder you if they would; and they would not if they could. It is their joy to ſee the houſe of God filled with gueſts that have on the wedding garment.

We muſt conclude therefore that it is the ungodly that are the wilfull and obſtinate dividers. They might be united to Chriſt, and reconciled to God, and they will not. They might be admitted into the Communion of Saints, and into the houſhold of God, and partake of the Priviledges of his children; and they will not. They have leave

to

to Read, and pray, and meditate, and walk with God in a heavenly converſation, as well as any of their neighbours; but they will not. It is themſelves that are the refuſers, and continue the diviſion, to the diſpleaſing of God, and the grief of their friends, and the gratifying of Satan, and the perdition of their own immortall Souls. We might all be united, and our diviſions be healed, and God much honoured, and Miniſters and good Chriſtians be exceedingly comforted, and the Church and Commonwealth be delivered and highly honoured, and themſelves be ſaved from everlaſting miſery, if we could but get the hearty conſent of

these foolish obstinate ungodly men.

What say you, wretched Souls, can you deny it? How long have your Teachers been labouring in vain, to bring you to the hearty Love of God, and heaven, and serious holiness? How long have they been perswading you to set up Reading, and Catechizing, and constant fervent prayer in your families, and yet it is undone? How long have they in vain been perswading the worldling from his worldliness, and the Proud person to humility, and the sensual beast from his tipling, and gluttony, and other fleshly pleasures?

And besides this, most of the disorders and divisions in the

the Churches are caused by ungodly men. I will instance in a few particulars.

1. When we ask any godly diligent Ministers, either in *London*, or the Country, why they do not unanimously catechize, instruct and confer with all the Inhabitants of their Parishes, man by man, to help them to try their spirituall state, and to prepare in health for death and judgement? they usually answer us, that alas their people will not consent, but many would revile them if they should attempt it.

2. When we ask them why they do not set up the practice of Discipline, which they so unanimously plead for? and why

why they do not call their people to Confirmation, or open profeſſion of faith and holineſs in order thereto; they tell us, that their people will not endure it; but many will rather ſet themſelves againſt the Miniſtry, and ſtrengthen the enemy that now endangereth the Churches ſafety, or turn to any licentious Sect, then they will thus ſubmit to the undoubted Ordinance of Chriſt, which the Churches are ſo commonly agreed in as a duty.

3. We have an ancient too-imperfect verſion of the Pſalms, which we ſing in the Congregations; & in the judgment of all Divines that ever I ſpoke with about it (of what

ſide

ſide ſoever) it is our duty to uſe a better Verſion, and not to perform ſo excellent a part of the publick Worſhip, ſo lamely, and with ſo many blemiſhes. And if you ask the Miniſters why they do not unanimouſly agree on a Reformed corrected Verſion, moſt of them will tell you, that their people will not bear it, but proudly and turbulently reproach them, as if they were changing the Word of God.

4. In many places the Sacrament of Baptiſm is ofter uſed in private houſes, then in the publick Aſſemblies; and if we ask the reaſon of ſo great a diſorder, the Miniſters will tell us that it is the unrulineſs and will-

wilfulneſs of the people, that proudly ſet themſelves above their Guides, and inſtead of obeying them, muſt rule them, and have their humors and conceits fulfilled, even in the holy things of God, or elſe they will revile the Paſtors, and make diviſions in the Church: And this is done by them that in other caſes do ſeem ſufficiently to reverence the place of publick Aſſembly as the houſe of God, and that ſpeak againſt private meetings, though but for prayer, repeating Sermons, or ſinging to the praiſe of God, while yet themſelves are wilfully bent for ſuch private meetings as are ſet up in oppoſition to the publick, and that

for

for the administration of so great an Ordinance as the Sacrament of Baptism, and in cases where there is no necessity of privacy: And who knows not that our Sacramentall Covenant with God, and engagement to a Christian life, and reception into a Christian state and priviledges, is fitter to be done with the most honourable solemnity, then in a conventicle, in a private house?

Too many more such instances I could give you, which shew who they be that are the enemies of our Unity; Even those that cry out against divisions while they cause them, and cry up Unity, concord and obedience, while they destroy them. (a) And

And ſhall we thus continue a diviſion that doth prognoſticate our Everlaſting diviſion? Is there no Remedy for ſo great a miſery, when yet our poor ungodly neighbours may heal it if they will? What if the Miniſters of the ſeverall Pariſhes, ſhould appoint one day of publick Conference with all the people of their Pariſhes together, and deſire all that are fit to ſpeak, to debate the caſe, and give their Reaſons, why they concur not in their hearts and lives with the holy diligent ſervants of the Lord? and let them hear the Reaſons why the godly dare not, and cannot come over to their negligent ungodly courſe? and ſo try who it is

long

long of among them, that they are not of One mind and way? what if the Miniſters then urged it on them, to agree all before they parted, to unite on the terms which God will own, and all unanimouſly to take that courſe that ſhall be found moſt agreeable to his Word; and whoever doth bring the fulleſt proof that his courſe is beſt, in reaſon, the reſt ſhould promiſe to joyn with him. What if we call the people together, and beſpeak them as *Elijah* did, 1 *Kings* 18. 21. *How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him.* [If a careleſs, ungodly, worldly, fleſhly life be beſt, and moſt

pleaſe God, and will comfort you moſt at death and judgement, then hold on in the way that you are in, and never purpoſe hereafter to repent of it, but let us all become as ſenſuall as you. But if it be only the life of faith, and holineſs, and ſeeking firſt the Kingdom and Righteouſneſs of God, that God, and Scripture, and reaſon will juſtifie, and that will comfort the ſoul in the hour of extremity, and that you ſhall wiſh a thouſand times you had followed, (in everlaſting miſery, when wiſhing is too late) if now you continue to neglect it; doth not common reaſon then require, that we all now agree to go that way which all will deſire

ſire to be found in at the laſt?]

One would think, if a Miniſter ſhould treat thus with his Pariſhioners, and urge ſuch a motion as this upon them, they ſhould not have the hearts or faces, to deny, or delay ſuch a neceſſary Agreement and Engagement, that would make their Pariſh and their ſouls ſo happy, and which nothing but the Devil and the befooled corrupted minds of ſinners hath any thing to ſay againſt! And yet its likely we ſhould either have ſuch an anſwer as *Elijah* had, even ſilence, (v. 21. *The people anſwered him not a word.*) Or elſe ſome plauſible promiſe, while we have them in a good mood, which would quickly be broken & come to

nothing. For indeed, they are all engaged already, by their baptiſmall Covenant and profeſſion of Chriſtianity, to the very ſame thing: and yet we ſee how little they regard it.

But yet becauſe it is our duty to uſe the means for the *Salvation* and *Concord* of our people, and wait on God by prayer for the ſucceſs, I have here ſhewed you the only way to both. Read it impartially, and then be your ſelves the Judges, on whom the blame of our greateſt and moſt dangerous diviſions will be laid; and for ſhame, either give over complaining that men are of ſo many minds, and profeſs your ſelves the enemies of Unity and Peace; or elſe

give

give over your damning, and dividing course, and yield to the Spirit of Christ, that would Unite you to his Body, and walk in Communion with his Saints: and let not these warnings be hereafter a witness against you to your confusion, which are intended for your salvation, and the healing of our discords by

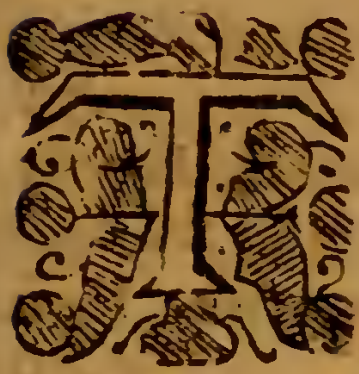
An unworthy servant of Jesus Christ, for the Calling and Edifying of his Members,

Decem. 10.
1659.

Rich. Baxter.

The

The Contents.



HE Introduction and Explication of the Text, to p. 14

Doct. *The true Unity of the Catholick Church of Christ consisteth in this, that they have all one sanctified Spirit within them,* p. 14

Explicatory Propositions, p. 16

Twenty Arguments to prove that Ungodliness *is the great divider, and that if ever there be a Union, it must be by the ungodlies comeing over to a holy life,* p. 19

Use 1. *Shewing plainly who are the causes of our great divisions,* p. 37

Ungodliness is all Heretical opini-

ons

ons combined and reduced to practice, p.43,&c.
It is against every Article of the Creed, and every one of the Commandments, and every Petition of the Lords Prayer, and every Ordinance of Worship, p 65
They are worse then meer Sectaries, p.73
Use 2. *How little cause the Papists have to glory, when they draw an ungodly man meerly into their Church,* p.80
Use 3. *How falsly Papists and Quakers tell us that the ungodly persons are the fruit of our Ministery,* p.83
Use 4. *A serious Motion for Unity and Peace, to all that would have us of one Religion,* p.88
Some more undenyable Reasons to prove that there is no other way of Unity but this one, p.100
Quest. *What is that Godliness that we must all unite in,* p.136

Quest.

Queſt. *What the nearer an Agreement ſhould we be? Do not the godly differ among themſelves?* p. 178

Uſe 5. *How little hope of perfect Unity on earth; And how much Unity may be expected among the Godly,* p. 195

Queſt. *Whether Unity in the Profeſſion of one Faith, Government and Worſhip, may ſerve turn?*

Ten diſcoveries of the inſufficiency of a Union, in meer profeſſion, p. 203

How much true godlineſs would conduce to heal our leſſer differences; and that we might do well notwithſtanding them, p. 234

Manifeſted in twenty four particulars.

Queſt. *How then comes it to paſs that there are ſo many differences among thoſe that you call godly, Anſwered,* p. 288

Advice to the godly, p. 308

Rom.

Rom. 14. 1. *Explained,* p. 313
Doct. *It is the will of God that the Unity of the Church should not be laid on indifferent, small or doubtfull things: but that true believers that differ in such things, should yet have inward Charity and outward Communion with each other, not censuring, nor despising, nor dividing upon this account,* p. 323
Convincing Reasons, p. 326
Several Uses or Consectaries: and an Exhortation applied to our difference about Christmas Day, p. 358

ERRATA.

PAge 90. l. 9. r. *enquire*: p. 91. l. 6. r. *except*: p. 192. l. 7. for *now*, r. *in time*: p. 275. l. 16. for *or*, r. *as*: p. 366. l. 12. for *it*, r. *them*: p. 377. l. 12. dele *in*

Catholick Unity.

EPHES. 4. 3.

Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

IT seems that *Unity* and *Felicity* are near kin, in that the world is so like affected to them both. As our *Felicity* is in *God*, and we lost it by falling from *God*; so our *Unity* is in *God*, and we lost it by departing from this Center of Unity. And as all men have

ſtill a natural deſire after *Felicity* in *general*; but God who is their Felicity, they neither know nor deſire; ſo have we ſtill a natural deſire after *Unity* in *it ſelf* conſidered; but God who is our Unity, is little known or deſired by the moſt. And as *nature* can perceive the evil of *Miſery* which is contrary to *Felicity*, and cry out againſt it, and yet doth cheriſh the certain *cauſes* of it, and will not be perſwaded to let them go: So *Nature* can perceive the evil of *Diviſion*, which is contrary to *Unity*, and cry out againſt it, and yet will not forbear the *cauſes* of Diviſion. And therefore as we ſay of *Felicity*, *Nature* by *Philoſophy ſeeks* it, *Divinity findeth* it, and *Religion poſſeſſeth* it: So may we ſay of true *Unity*; *Philoſophy* or *Nature ſeeks* it, *Divinity findeth* it, and *Religion* or *Holineſs poſſeſſeth* it. And as moſt of the world

do

do miſs of Felicity, for all their high eſteem of it, and fall into miſery for all their hatred of it, becauſe they love not the *object* and *way* of Felicity, and hate not the *Matter* and *Way* of Miſery. Even ſo moſt of the world do miſs of *Unity*, for all their high eſteem of Unity, and fall into miſerable diſtractions and *Diviſions* for all their hatred of Diviſion, becauſe they love not the *center* and *way* of *Unity*, and hate not the *occaſion* and *cauſes* of Diviſion. And as the very reaſon why the moſt are ſhut out of Happineſs, is their own wilful refuſing of the true matter and means of Happineſs, and no one could undo them but themſelves, for all that they are loth to be undone: Even ſo the very Reaſon why the world attaineth not to Unity, is their own wilful refuſing of the true *Center* and *Means* of Unity; and it is themſelves that

are the wilful causes of their own Divisions; even when they cry out against Divisions. And as there's no *way* to *Happiness*, but by *Turning* to *God* from whom we fell, that in *him* we may be happy; and no way to *God* but by *Jesus Christ* as the Saviour, and the *Holy-Ghost* as the Sanctifier; so there is no *way* to true *Unity*, but by *Turning* to *God* that we may be one in him; and no way to *him*, but being united to *Christ*, and being quickned by that One most holy Spirit that animateth his members. And yet as poor souls do weary themselves in vain, in *seeking Felicity* in their own wayes and devices; so do they deceive themselves in *seeking Unity* in wayes that are quite destructive to Unity. One thinks we must be united in the Pope; and another, in a General Council; another saith, we shall never have Unity till the Magistrate force us all

all one way; (and yet they would not be forced from their own way.) Another turns Atheiſt, or Infidel, or Impious, by obſerving the Diviſions that be among Chriſtians, and ſaith, [It is this Scripture, and Religion, and Chriſt, that hath ſet the world together by the ears; and we ſhall never have Unity till we all live according to Nature, and caſt off their needleſs cares and fears of another life.] And thus the miſerable deluded world are groping in the dark after *Unity* and *Felicity*, while both are at hand, and they wickedly reject them; and many of them become ſo mad, as to run away from God, from Chriſt, from the Spirit, as if *he* were the cauſe of *Miſery* and *Diviſion*, who is the only Center of *Felicity* and *Unity*. And thus as it is but *Few* that arrive at *Happineſs* for all their *deſire* of it; ſo it is but *Few*

that attain to *Unity*; to *such* a Unity as is worth the attaining to.

I dare presume to take it for granted, that all you that hear me this day, would fain have Divisions taken away, and have Unity, and Concord, and Peace through the world. What say you? would you not have us all of one mind, and of one Religion? and would you not fain have an Agreement, if it might be, through all the world? I am confident you would. But you little think that its you and such as you that are the hinderers of it. All the question is, What *Mind* that is that all should be *One* in? and what Religion that is that all men should agree in? Every man would have all men of *one mind*, and *one Religion*; but then it must be of *his* mind, and of *his* Religion; and so we are never the nearer an agreement.

Well!

Well! what would you give now to be certainly told the only way to Unity and Agreement? There is but *One* way; when you have sought about as long as you will, you must come to that *One* way, or you will be never the nearer it. What would you give to know undoubtedly, which is that *One* way! O that the world were but *willing* to know it, and to follow it when they know it. Well! I dare promise you from the information of the Holy-Ghost here given us in this Text that now I have read to to you, to tell you the *Only* way to true Unity; and blessed is he that learneth it, and walketh in it.

This Text is a *Precept* containing the *work* required of us, with its double Object; the one the means to the other. The next verse is an exposition of this. As the Natural man hath *One Body*, and *One Soul*, which constitute it a

man; so the Church which is the mystical Body of Christ, is one Body, consisting of many members united by *One* Spirit. Every Common-wealth or Political Body hath 1. Its *Constitutive* causes that give it its Being and its Unity; and 2. Its *Administration* and *preserving* causes, as Laws, Execution, Obedience, *&c.* that exercise and preserve, and perfect its Being. The Constitutive cause is the Soveraign and the Subject conjoyned in their Relation. So is it with the Church, which is a Political Body, (but of a transcendent kind of Policy.) The *Constitutive* Causes of the Church are *Christ* and the *members* united in *One Spirit*: And this is the *final* part of the Duty here required [*To keep the Unity of the Spirit*] The *Preserving* cause is the Peaceable behaviour of the members: and this is the *mediate* Duty here required, [*In the bond*

bond of Peace] Our own *Endeavours* are hereto required; becauſe as every natural body muſt by eating, and drinking, and fit exerciſe and uſage, be a cauſe of its own preſervation, and not forbear theſe under pretence of truſting the all-ſufficiency of God; and as every *Political* Body, muſt by *Government* and *Arms* in caſe of need preſerve themſelves under God; ſo muſt the Body of Chriſt, the Church, be diligent in uſing their beſt *endeavours* to preſerve the Being and well-being of the whole. So that you ſee here are two cauſes of the Churches Unity expreſſed: 1. The *principal Conſtitutive* cauſe in which our Unity conſiſteth; and that is [*The Spirit.*] 2. The *Preſerving* cauſe, by which our Unity is cheriſhed, and that is [*Peace*] which therefore is called [*the bond*] of it. The fifth and ſixth verſes do open this *Unity of Spirit*, in its

parts, effects and ends. [*There is One Hope of our Calling*] that is, One Heaven or Life Eternal, which is the end of our Christianity and Church Constitution [*There is one Lord*] Jesus Christ; One Head, one Saviour, one Soveraign Redeemer, to whom by this Spirit the members are all United. [*There is One Faith*] both one *summe of holy Doctrine*, which all that will be saved must believe (which was used to be professed by the adult at Baptism) and *One* internal saving Faith, which this Spirit causeth in our Spirits, and useth it as a means of our union with Christ in whom we do believe. [*There is One Baptism*] or solemn Covenanting with God, the Father, Son and Holy-Ghost; and the same promise there to be made by all. And [*there is One God the Father of all*] from whom we fell, and to whom we must be recovered, and who is the

the End of all, and to whom Christ and all these means are the Way. So that all these are implyed in, and conjunct with [*the Unity of the Spirit.*]

The sense of the Text then briefly is this: [*As all the living true members of Christ and the Church have one Spirit (and so one Faith) by which they are all united to Christ the Head, and so to the Father in and by him, which Union in One Spirit is your very Life, and it that constituteth you true members of Christ and his Church; so it must be your care and great endeavour to preserve this Spirit in you, and this vital Unity which by this Spirit you have with Christ and one another: and the way to preserve it, is by the bond of Peace among your selves.*] It is here evident then that all the members of Christ and his Body have *One Spirit*, and in that is their Union. All the question is, *What Spirit*

Spirit this is? And that's left past all doubt in the Chapter: For though the *common* gifts of the Spirit are sometime called by that name, yet these are no further meant in the Text then as appurtenances or additions to greater gifts: As godliness hath the promise of the common mercies of this life, as well as of the special mercies of the life to come; but yet with great difference; the later being *absolutely* promised, and the former but *limitedly* (so far as God sees best for us): Even so the Spirit gave to the members of the Church both Sanctifying Grace, and common Gifts; but with great difference: giving Sanctification to all and only the members of Christ; but giving common gifts also to some others, and to them but with limitation, for sort, and season, and measure, and continuance, as God should

see

ſee good. It is then the ſame Holy-Ghoſt as our Sanctifier into whoſe name we are baptized, as well as into the name of the Father and the Son, and in whom we all profeſs to believe, that is here meant in my Text. And it is only the Sanctified that are the people United to Chriſt and to One another. This is proved expreſly by that which followeth, verſ. 6, 7. It is thoſe that have the *One Hope*, *one Lord*, *one Faith*, *one Baptiſm*, *one God the Father*, verſ. 12. It is the *Saints and body of Chriſt* that are *to be perfected by the Miniſtry*, verſ. 13, 15, 16. It is thoſe that muſt *come in the Unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God to a perfect man, to the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt*; *and that grow up in all things in Chriſt the Head*: It is the Body that is *United to him*, and *compacted in Love*, and *edifieth it ſelf in Love*:

verſ.

verſ. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. It is thoſe that *have ſo learned Chriſt, as to put off the old man that is corrupt, and are renewed in the Spirit of their minds, and put on the new man, Which after God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs.*] If therefore any words be plain, its plain that its true Saints only that are here ſpoken of, that have the *Unity of ſpirit* which they muſt preſerve in the *bond of Peace.* And therefore I ſhall make this Obſervation the ground of my diſcourſe.

Doct. *The true Unity of the Catholick Church of Chriſt conſiſteth in this, that they have all one Sanctifying ſpirit within them.*

By the Holy-Ghoſt within them they are all United to Chriſt and to one another: By this One Spirit they are all made Saints, or an Holy people, having One Heaven for the

the matter of their Hopes, One Christ their Head, One summe of Christian doctrine, which they believe, containing all the Essentials of Christian Faith; and One living principle of Faith to believe it; One solemn Covenant with Christ; and One God the Father their End and All.

It is only the Sanctified that have true Christian Unity; and it is *unholiness or ungodliness that is the cause of the miserable Divisions of the World.* Now, Sirs, you see the *Only way to Unity*: Even to have *One Sanctifying spirit* within us, and be *all an Holy People*; and there is no way but this: Now you see the principal cause of Division; even unholiness, and refusing the Spirit of Grace.

In handling this point, 1. I shall give you some Propositions that are necessary for the fuller understanding of it. 2. I shall demonstrate

ſtrate the Point to you, by fuller Evidence of Reaſon. 3. I ſhall make Application of it.

I. PROP. 1. Though it be only the Sanctified that have the true Union of Members with Chriſt and the Body; yet all that make Profeſſion of Sanctification, and Null not that Profeſſion, have an Extrinſick, Analogical Union in profeſſion: As the wooden or dead leg is united to the body, and the dead branch to the Vine: And ſo even Hypocrites muſt not only dwell among us, but *be* of the ſame *viſible Church* with us, as the *chaff* and *tares* are in the ſame corn-field. And as long as they ſeem Saints we muſt value them, and uſe them as Saints, and love them, and have Communion with them as Saints: Not as conceiving them

certainly

certainly to be such, but *probably*, and by that humane faith, by which we are bound to believe their profession; not as we believe God, who is Infallible; but as men that are fallible: And this in several Degrees, according to the several Degrees of their Credibility, and the Probability of their Profession. So that you must not after this mistake me, as if I tyed our *external Church-Communion* only to *true* Saints; for then we must have Communion with none; because being not able to search the hearts, we know not what Professors are sincere. But yet even this *External* Church-Communion belongs only to them that make *Profession* of Love and Holiness, as well as of Belief; and no lower Profession must serve the turn.

Prop. 2. There is a *Common Unity* of humane Nature that we have with *all men*, and a common Peace that

that *as much as in us lyeth we must hold with all*, Rom. 12. 18. But this is nothing to the Unity in question, which belongeth to our happiness. The Devils have a Unity of Nature, and some order and accord in Evil; for if *Satan be divided, how can his kingdom stand?* Mat. 12.26.

Prop. 3. The Unity of the Saints in the Spirit of Holiness, consisteth in this life with much imperfection and discord, according to the imperfection of their Holiness. But as Grace is the seed of Glory, and the beginning of Eternal Life, for all its weakness, and the sins that accompany it (*John* 17. 3.); So the Unity of the Spirit of holiness, is the seed and beginning of the perfect Unity in Heaven, for all the differences and discord that here accompany it.

II. Having

II. HAving ſhewed you the only bond of Unity, I come now by fuller evidence to convince you of the truth of what is ſaid, and even to force it into your underſtandings, if you will but uſe your Reaſon, and believe the Word of God. It is *unholineſs* and *ungodlineſs* that cauſeth our *Diſcord*; and it is the *Spirit of Holineſs* that is the *Uniting Principle*; and there's no *true Chriſtian Unity* to be had with *ungodly* men: Never think of *Unity* by any other way then *Sanctification*: You are as on the other ſide of the River, and cannot be united to the ſervants of Chriſt, till the Spirit Convert you, and paſs you over. You are dead men, and unfit to be United to the *living*; and its the *Spirit that quickneth*, and this *Life* muſt be our *Union*. You madly rail

rail againſt *Diviſion*, and yet ſtand at a diſtance from Chriſt and his Church, and maintain the greateſt diviſion in the world. Believe it, you do but doat and dream, if you think to have true *Chriſtian Unity* on any other terms, then by the Sanctifying Spirit of Chriſt. And this I ſhall now evince as followeth.

1. You know ſure that there can be no Chriſtian Unity; but in God as your *Father*, and the Center of *Unity*: All the true members of the Catholick Church muſt ſay [*Our Father*] and be as his children United in him. If you will have Unity without the favour of God, it muſt be the Unity of Rebels, and ſuch a concord as is in Hell: The family of God do all Unite in him: As all the *Kingdom* is United in one *King*; ſo is all the *Church* in *God*. Can you think it poſſible to have Unity, as long as you

you will not Unite in God? Well then; there's nothing plainer in the Scripture, then that all men by nature are departed from God, and none are United to him but those that are regenerate and made new creatures; not a man is his child by Grace, and in his favour, but only those that are sanctified by his Spirit, *Joh.* 3. 3, 5. *Mat.* 18. 3. 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. *Heb.* 12. 14. So that there's no true *Unity* without *Sanctification*, because there's no reconciliation with God, nor Unity with him, without it.

2. There can be no true *Christian Unity* but in *Christ* the Redeemer and *Head* of the Church: For how can the members be United but in the Head? or the Scholars but in their Teacher? or the Subjects but in their Soveraign? You know there's no *Christian Unity* but in *Christ*. Well then; What Unity can we have with those

thoſe that are not in Chriſt? The unſanctified have indeed the *name* of Chriſtians: but what is that to the nature? Some branches not bearing fruit are ſaid to be in him the Vine, by outward profeſſion: but they are dead and withered, and muſt be cut off and caſt away for the fire: and ſo are unfit for Communion with the Vine, *John* 15. *He that is in Chriſt is a new creature: old things are paſt away, behold all things are become new.* 2 Cor. 5. 17. *If any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt* (which is this ſanctifying Spirit) *the ſame is none of his.* I pray you mark the plainneſs of theſe paſſages. All you that are unconverted and unſanfied, are out of Chriſt, and none of his, though you may talk and boaſt of him as long as you will. And therefore you cannot have *Unity* with *Chriſtians*, till you will firſt have Unity with *Chriſt himſelf.*

ſelf. Till you are engraffed into *him*, you are not engraffed into the *Catholick Church*, but only *ſeem* to be what you are not.

3. The *dead* cannot be United to the *living*: who will be married to a dead corpſe? or would be tyed to it, and carry it about? It is *life* that muſt Unite us: The unſanctified are *dead* in ſin, *Eph.* 2. 5. and the Spirit is given to quicken the dead, that they may be fit for converſe. What Union can there be between a block and a man; or a beaſt that hath but a ſenſitive life, and a man that hath a rational Soul? So what Union between the ſenſual world and the ſanctified Believer? If you could have *Unity* without the *Sanctifying Spirit*, why are you then Baptized into the name of the Holy-Ghoſt as your *Sanctifier?* To have a *Unity* of *Being* is common to us with the *Devils*; for they are Gods creatures,

tures, and so are *we*. To have a *Union* of *Specifick Being* is common to us with all the *damned*, for they are *men* as well as we; and common to the Devils among themselves. But it must be a Unity in the Spirit of Holiness that must prove us happy, and afford us comfort.

4. There is no possibility of having Unity with those that have not the *same ultimate principal end*. But the *sanctified* and the *unsanctified* have not the *same end*, nay have *contrary ends*. If one of you will go to *York*, and the other to *London*, how can you possibly go one way? This is the great difference that sets the world and the sanctified by the ears: *You* serve *Mammon*, and *they* serve *God*: *You* have *one portion*, and *they another*: *Your portion* is in *this life*, Psalm 17. 14. *Here* you *have your good things*, Luke 16. 25. and here you *lay up your*

your treasure, Mat. 6.19, 21. *Your belly is your God, and you mind earthly things.* Phil. 3. 18. But it is the *Lord* that is the *portion of the Saints*, Psal. 16. 5. *They lay up a treasure in heaven*, Mat. 6. 20. and *there* they have *their conversations*, Phil. 3.20. *Being risen with Christ, they seek the things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God; for they are dead, and their life is hid with Christ in God*, Col.3.1,3,4. The *business* that the Saints, and that the ungodly have in the world, is clean contrary. *Their* business is for *Heaven*; and *yours* is for *earth*; They are *sowing to the Spirit* in hope of *everlasting life*, and you are *sowing to the flesh*, and *shall reap corruption*, Gal. 6. 5, 7. They are making Provision for another life, that never shall have end; and you are *making provision for the flesh, to satisfie its desires*, Rom. 13.14. And how is it

possible for these to be United? *What concord between light and darkness? or Christ and* Belial? *or righteousness with unrighteousness?* 2 Cor. 6. 14, 15. *Can two walk together except they be agreed?* Amos 3. 3. We must better agree of our *business* in the world, and of our journeys *end*, before we can keep company with you. While *you* are *for earth* and *we for heaven*, it is not possible that we should go one way. While one is for the world, and another for God, they must needs differ: For God and the world are masters that are unreconcileable. If you will cleave to one, you must despise the other.

The work of the Butcher and the Souldier is to kill: and the work of the Surgeon and Physitian is to cure. And do you think these will ever take one course? The Souldier studies how to wound and kill: The Surgeon studies

dies how to close these wounds and heal them. And surely these must go contrary wayes. Sirs, as long as your business is principally for the flesh and the world; and the business of the sanctified is against the flesh and world, and for the Spirit and the world to come, how is it possible that you should be agreed? You must bring heaven and earth together first; yea heaven and hell together first, before you can have a Christian Unity and Agreement between the sanctified and the unsanctified.

5. There is no *Unity* to be had, but *in the Gospel*. The Apostle tels us, *there is One Faith*, Eph. 4. 5. If an Angel from heaven would preach another Gospel, he must be accursed, *Gal.* 1. 10, 11. But the unsanctified do not truly and heartily entertain this Gospel. You *think* and *say* you truly believe it, when you *do not*. If you truly

believed it, your lives would ſhew it. He that indeed believes an everlaſting Glory, will ſure look after it, more then after the world or the fleſh.

6. There is no Chriſtian Unity, but in the Chriſtian Nature. Contrary natures cannot cloſe. Fire and Water, the Woolf and the Lamb, the Bear and the Dog, will not well Unite. The ſanctified have a new, divine and heavenly nature, *Joh.* 3. 6. 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. Their Diſpoſition is another way then it was before. But the unſanctified have the old corrupt fleſhly nature ſtill: One is as the fire, ſtill bending upward; the other as the earth or ſtone, ſtill bending downward to the earth: And how can theſe agree together?

7. There is no *Chriſtian Unity* to be had, where the *Affections run quite contrary wayes.* But ſo it is with the *ſanctified* and the *unſanctified*

fied. One loves God above all, and cannot live without holy Communion with him, and retireth into him from the distractions of the world, and maketh him his Rest, Content and Solace: The other mentions the goodness of God, but findeth no such sweetness in him, nor desires after him. One treads the world underfoot as dirt, or valueth and useth it but as a help to heaven: And the other makes it his happiness, and sets his heart on it. One delighteth in Holiness, and the other hateth it, or regardeth it not. One hateth sin as a Serpent, or as death; and the other makes it his meat, and drink, and business. And how is it possible for men of such contrary affections to be agreed? and natures at such enmity to Unite?

8. The *sanctified and unsanctified are moved by contrary Objects: One* lives by faith on things that

are out of sight, and strives for Heaven as if he *saw* it, and strives against Hell as if he *saw* it; for his *faith is the evidence of things not seen*, Heb. 11. 1, 7. *We live by faith, and not by sight*, 2 Cor. 5. 7. 2 Cor. 4. 18. But the *unsanctified* live upon things that *are seen*, and things believed little move them, because they are not *heartily believed*.

9. The *Holy and the unholy* do live *by contrary Laws*. One liveth by the Law of God, and there asketh counsel what he must think, or say, or do, resolving to obey God, before his flesh, and all the world. The other will say, he will be ruled by Gods Law, till his flesh and carnal interest contradict it, and then he will take his lusts for his Law: His *Pride* is a Law to him, and the pleasures and profits of the world are a Law to him, and the will of great ones, and the customs of men are his Law. And how is it possible for

for men to agree that walk by such *contrary Rules* as these?

10. There is no true *Unity* but in the *Covenant with Christ.* As *Marriage Uniteth* man and wife; so every truly sanctified man, hath delivered up himself to Christ in a peremptory absolute Covenant, and hath quit all claim of interest in himself, and is wholly Gods. But the *unsanctified* will not be brought to this, any further then the lips, and therefore they cannot be well United.

11. The true members of the Church are *built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets*, Eph. 2. 20, 21. But the unsanctified regard them not, if they cross their minds.

12. There is no true *Christian Unity*, but with the *Holy Catholick Church.* The body is but one, 1 *Cor.* 12. 12, 13. *Eph.* 4. 4. But the unsanctified are not of the

Holy Catholick Church, but only in the visible external Communion of it.

13. There can be no true *Christian Unity* with the Saints, without a *special Love* to the Saints. For by this we know that *we are passed from death to life, because we love the Brethren; he that loveth not his brother abideth in death*, 1 John 3. 14. *By this must all men know that we are Christs Disciples*, John 13. 35. Love is the bond and cement of the Church. He that doth not heartily love a godly sanctified man, because he is such, hath no true Unity with the Church. But the *ungodly* love them not as such: They see no such beauty and lovelinesse in Holinesse. Though Scripture call it Gods Image, they be not in Love with Gods Image; but think it a conceit, or hypocritical pretence, or a wearysom thing. Why! poor carnal wretches, do

lo you hate the godly, and yet would you have Unity with them? Do you hate them, and yet cry out againſt Diviſions, when your hearts are thus divided from God and his ſervants? You muſt learn to Love them with a ſpecial Love, and Chriſt in them, before you can be United with them.

14. There is no Unity to be had wi hout a *Love to the Body* that you are United to. You muſt Love the Church and long for its proſperity, and the ſucceſs of the Goſpel, and the downfall of wickedneſs. Thus do the Saints: but thus do not the ungodly. Nay many of them are glad when they hear of any evil befall the godly.

15. There is no true *Unity* without a *ſingular reſpect* to the *ſpecial members* that are the ligaments and chief Inſtruments of Unity; even the Officers of the Church and moſt uſeful members.

The Overseers of the Church must *be highly esteemed in Love for their work sake*, 1 Thes. 5. 12. Thus do the godly, but not the ungodly.

16. There must be an *inward inclination to the Communion of Saints*, before there can be any agreement and Unity. All that are of *the Holy Catholick Church*, must desire *the Communion of Saints*. Their *delight must be in them*, Psal. 16. 3. But the ungodly have no such delight in their Communion.

17. If you will have *Unity* and *Communion* with the Church, you must have a Love to the *Holy Ordinances*, which are the *means of Communion*: as to the Word of God, heard and read, to Prayer, Sacraments, Confession, *&c.* But the ungodly have either a distaste of these, or but a common delight in the outside, and not in the Spirit of the Ordinance. And therefore

they

they cannot agree with the Church: when you loath that which is our meat and drink, and we cannot feed at one Table together, what Agreement can there be?

18. If you will *Agree*, you must *work* in the same *Vineyard*, and labour in the same employment, and walk the same way as the sanctified do: And that is in a way of holiness and righteousness, *giving all diligence to make your calling and election sure*, 2 Pet. 1. 10. If you live to the flesh, and they live to the Spirit, (*Rom.* 8. 5, 13.) What Unity and Agreement can there be?

19. There is no Unity to be had, unless you will joyn in a defensive and offensive league, and in an opposition to that which would tend to our destruction. What Common-wealth will Unite with them that defend their enemies

and

and rebels? There is an enmity put in the beginning between the seed of the woman and of the Serpent, *Gen.* 3. 15. Because we are not of the world, the world will hate us, *John* 15. 19 If you will be United to the Church and people of Christ, you must be at enmity with sin, and hate it, and joyn for the destroying of it; and you must be souldiers in Christs Army, which the Devil and his army fight against; and you must fight against the flesh, the world, and the devil, and not live in friendship with them. But this the unsanctified will not do.

20. And therefore because you will not be United to them in the state and Kingdom of Grace, you shall not be United with them, in the state and Kingdom of Glory.

And thus I have made it plain to you, that none can have true Union.

Union with the Church of Christ, but only they that are sanctified by the Spirit.

Use 1.

BY this time you may see, if you are willing to see, who it is long of that the world is all in pieces by divisions, and who are the greatest hinderers of Unity. Even unsanctified, ungodly men. And you may see how fit these men are to cry out against Divisions, that are the principal causes of them: And how wisely they deal to cry up Unity, and in the mean time resist the only ground and way of Unity: As *Joshua* said to *Achan*, 7. 25. [*Why hast thou troubled us? the Lord shall trouble thee this day.*] So I may say to all the

the ungodly, *Why trouble you the Church, and hinder Unity? you shall one day have trouble your selves for this.* They cry out against the Ministry and others that fear God, as *Ahab* did to *Elijah*, *Art thou he that troubleth* Israel? But saith *Elijah*, It is thou and thy Fathers house that trouble *Israel*, in that ye have forsaken the Commandment of the Lord, 1 *King.* 18. 17, 18. Sirs, I tell you, (and I may confidently tell you when I have proved it so fully) that it is *the ungodly that are the great Dividers of the World.* Its you that *make* the breach, and *keep* it open. We are willing to agree to any thing that is *reasonable* or *possible*; but there is no *possibility* of Agreeing with the ungodly, unless they will turn. It would make any honest heart to ake, to see these wretches set all on fire, and then cry out against others as the Authors of it.

As

As *Nero* ſet *Rome* on fire, and then perſecuted the Chriſtians for it, as if it had been done by them. They pluck up the Foundations, and hold moſt damnable practical errours; and when they have done, they go about reviling other men as erroneous. I ſpeak not in the excuſe or extenuation of other mens errours: I have ſpoke my part againſt them alſo: But I tell you, it is the prophane and ignorant rabble, and all the ungodly, whether Gentlemen, Schollars, or of what rank ſoever, that are the great dividers, and ſtand at the greateſt diſtance from Chriſtian Unity. O what a happy Church ſhould we have, for all the ſects that trouble us ſo much, if it were not for ungodlineſs that animateth ſome of thoſe ſects, and virtually containeth many more! Had we none but men fearing God to deal with, we ſhould have no oppoſition to the Eſſentials of Religion;

ligion ; and we ſhould ſtill have the comfort of agreeing with them in all things neceſſary to ſalvation. They would carry on their differences in Chriſtian meekneſs, charity and moderation : and at the worſt our Agreement would be greater then our diſagreement. But when we have to deal with haters of holineſs, or at leaſt with men that are ſtrangers to the ſanctifying work of the Spirit, we have predominant Pride, and Selfiſhneſs, and Covetouſneſs to ſtrive againſt : We have radicated Infidelity, and enmity to God and holineſs, giving life and ſtrength to all their errours, and making them ſtubborn, and wilful, and ſcornful, againſt the cleareſt truths that can be ſhewed them. There is no dealing effectually with a carnal heart, for any but God himſelf. Unleſs we can create light in them, as well as reveal the truth to them, what good

good can we do them? What good doth the Sun to a man that is blind? They have understandings left, and therefore they can err: but they have no heavenly light in them, and therefore they cannot choose but err: They have wills, and therefore are capable of sin: but they have no holy rectitude of them, and therefore sin they will with obstinacy. When we dispute with the godly, that err through *weakness*, we deal with men that have eyes in their heads, and life in their souls, and some savour and experience of the matters of God. But when we dispute with the ungodly, we deal with the blind, we talk to the dead, we offer the bread of life to men that have no appetite, or savour of it: yea we speak for God, to enemies of God; and for truth, to the natural enemies of such truths; and the more obstinate enemies, because they know

it

it not. Had we nothing but miſtakes to argue againſt, and had we but to do with men that have the free uſe of their reaſon, we ſhould do well enough with them. But when we muſt perſwade the deaf, the diſtracted and the dead; when we muſt diſpute with Pride, and Paſſion, and Enmity, and perſwade a Lyon to become a Lamb, and a Serpent to lay by his venom, no wonder if we find a difficult task of it. Had we none but the *Godly* to deal with, we ſhould have abundant *advantage* for ſucceſs; we ſhould deal with men that Love the truth, and are willing to uſe right means to diſcover it: They would pray with us for truth, as well as diſpute; they would with meekneſs ſearch the Scripture, and ſee whether theſe things be ſo or not: They would yield to light when it appeareth to them, and not impriſon it in unrighteouſneſs.

And

And it would move us to more tender dealing with them, while we see and love Christ in them, and when we remember that the men that we now dispute with, we must live with in Heaven, and join with in the everlasting Praises of the Lord. I profess Sirs, I speak to you from sad experience, I have been troubled with Antinomians, and Anabaptists, and other errours in well-meaning men, as much as most: And many a daies work they have made me in writing and disputing against them. But alas, this is nothing to the trouble that the profane, ungodly do put me to. I thank God, I have dealt with all these errours with so good success, that I live in peace by them; and I know not of an Anabaptist, or Socinian, or Arminian, or Quaker, or Separatist, or any such sect in the Town where I live; except half a dozen Papists that never heard me.

But

But Infidels, Atheists, ungodly wretches I am pestered with still: One heresie called Drunkenness, that denyeth the use of reason it self, doth still walk the streets in despight of all that I can say, or all that the Magistrates will do; and none of us all are able to confute them. In one hours time they will fetch more arguments from the Alehouse, then all the reason in the Town can effectually answer.

And as the ungodly are most desperately *principled* of any Hereticks in the world, both for the quality and the radication of their errours; so there are far greater *numbers* of them, then of all other Heresies set together. It may be we have one or two Anabaptists in a Parish, and in some Parishes none; in some few it may be twenty: But O that I could say, I had not twenty, and twenty, and twenty, and twice twenty more un-

unſanctified ungodly perſons in my Pariſh! though I hope there is as many better, as in any Pariſh I know. Alas, Sirs, into how many Pariſhes may you go, and find groſs ignorance, profaneneſs, worldlineſs, contempt of God and heavenly things, to be their common air which they breath in, and the natural complexion of the inhabitants, as blackneſs is to Ethiopians. It is a bleſſed Pariſh, that of three thouſand inhabitants, hath not above two thouſand natural hereticks; even ungodly perſons that are ſtrangers to ſanctification. And who then do you think is likeſt to be the cauſe of our diſtractions and diviſions?

Moreover, let me tell you, Profaneneſs and Ungodlineſs is not a ſingle errour or hereſie; but it is the ſumme of all the hereſies in the world. You will think this ſtrange, when you ſee ſo many that joyn with

with us in a ſound profeſſion, and ſome of them zealous defenders of the truth; and many of them cry out againſt errours: But alas, they believe not that which they think they do believe. They hold not that which they ſay they hold. There's much in their Creed, that was never in their Belief. Doubtleſs ungodlineſs is the neſt of all the Hereſies in the world.

Will you give me leave to inſtance in ſome particulars. The greateſt errour in the world is Atheiſm, when men deny the Godhead it ſelf. And do not the moſt of the ungodly deny him in their hearts? If he be not Juſt, he is not God: and they deny and hate his Juſtice: If he be not Holy, he is not God: And they deny in their hearts, and hate his Holineſs: If he be not True, he is not God: And they commonly believe that he is not true: ſhew them where he hath

hath ſaid, that none but the converted, the ſanctified, the regenerate, the heavenly, the ſelf-denying ſhall be ſaved; and they will not believe that this will be made good, but hope its falſe. If he be not wiſe, and be not the Governour of the world, he is not God. And theſe wretches qua rel with his holy Laws, as if they could tell how to mend them themſelves, and were wiſer to make a Law then God is; and by flat Rebellion deny his Government. So that we may truly ſay with *David*, Pſal. 14. that theſe fools ſay in their hearts that there is no God: or elſe they durſt not ſay and do in his preſence as they do.

Moreover *Idolatry*, which is the ſetting up of falſe Gods, is a moſt abominable damning ſin. And every ungodly man is guilty of it. Covetouſneſs is idolatry, *Eph.* 5.5. and the ſenſual make their belly their

their God, *Phil.* 3. 18. And Pride and Selfiſhneſs which are the heart of the old man, are nothing elſe but making our ſelves our Idols. Every unſanctified man is his own Idol; giving to himſelf the honour, and pleaſure, and love thats due to God alone; and ſetting up his own will inſtead of Gods.

Polutheiſm, which is the feigning of many Gods, is a moſt damnable errour: And how many Gods have all that are ungodly? No man departeth from the one true God, but he makes to himſelf many falſe Gods in his ſtead. His wealth, and his credit, and his throat, and his recreations, and the Rulers that are capable of hurting him, are all as his Gods, and to them he gives that which is due to God only.

Infidelity is one of the moſt damning errours in the world; when men believe not in Chriſt that

that bought them: But this is the case of all the unsanctified. An Opinion they have that the Gospel is true; and Christ is the only Lord and Saviour: but Infidelity is predominant in them, and therefore should denominate them; or else they should be saved, if they were true Believers. Never did they give an hours true entertainment to Christ in their hearts.

To *set up a false Christ*, is one of the most damning sins in the world. And what else do all the ungodly, that place their hopes for pardon and salvation, either in their own good works, or carnal shifts, or at least, by false conceptions do make Christ not indeed to be Christ?

To have many Saviours, is a damnable errour. And how many do the ungodly make to themselves, while they depart from the Lord Christ?

To deny the Holy-Ghoſt, is a damnable errour. And what elſe do all the ungodly in the world, that will not be ſanctified by him? This is the moſt palpable errour that they are guilty of: They are baptized into the name of the Holy-Ghoſt as their Sanctifier, and yet they will not be ſanctified by him: Nay ſome of them make a mock of the Spirit, and of ſanctification. And ſome of them will hearken to falſe deceiving Spirits, inſtead of the Holy Spirit of God.

Some Hereticks have denyed ſome parts of the Scripture, and Infidels deny it all. And what leſs do all ungodly men, that believe it not heartily, and will not obey it, but deny it in parts, and refuſe ſubjection to it? They will not be ſo holy, not they, let Scripture ſay what it will. Are not all the ungodly againſt the Scripture? Many a time

time have I heard them, when the times more encouraged them, deriding the Bible, and those that did but carry a Bible, or speak of the Scripture, or read it in their houses. Certainly, he that fights against Scripture in his life, is more against it, then he that only denys it with his tongue.

Moreover, the *Pelagian* Hereticks denyed *Original sin*, and justified mans Nature: And so doth profaness in a very great measure. Never were the ungodly truly humbled for their Original sin, nor saw any such matter in themselves, as to make them abhor themselves! And what is this but actually to deny it?

The same Pelagians made light of *Grace*, which is Gods Image upon the soul. But in this the ungodly go quite beyond them: They make a matter of nothing of Holiness, but account it a fancy,

or a needleſs thing; and many of them hate it, and if the times did but favour their malice, there were no living near them for any that fear God: In this they are Devils in fleſh; I cannot liken them to any hereſie, but Deviliſm, they go ſo far beyond the profeſſions of them all.

One ſect is againſt thoſe that are *their* oppoſers, and another ſect againſt *their* oppoſers; but ungodlineſs is againſt all that are godly of every party whatſoever: and is in open arms or ſecret enmity againſt the army of Chriſt, and againſt himſelf.

The *Simonians*, and *Nicolaitans*, and *Gnoſticks* of old, did hold that men might do any outward action, when there is no other way to eſcape ſuffering, as long as they keep their hearts to God. So think the ungodly, as appeareth by their practice: Before they will loſe their eſtates

estates and be brought to poverty, or before they will lie in prison, or be burnt at a stake, they will say any thing, or do any thing: They would worship a piece of bread as if it were God: they would turn to Papists or any that can do them a mischief, if it were the Turks.

Alas, the particular sects among us, do play a small game in comparison of the ungodly; and hold but petty errours to theirs: *One* sect is against *one* Ordinance, and *another* sect is against *another* Ordinance; but the ungodly are against *all*. The Sectaries are against something in the *manner* or *out-side* of the work: but the ungodly are against the *Spirit and Life*, and substance of the duty it self: One sect depraveth the doctrine of Faith; and another the doctrine of Repentance, and another the doctrine of Obedience: But the ungodly deprave all the doctrine

of Godlineſs; yea *deny* it and not only *deprave* it: They ſweep away all before them, and go by wholeſale: They ſtand not to ſpeak as other Hereticks, againſt this Grace or that Grace, but againſt all: It is Godlineſs it ſelf that the ungodly are againſt.

The Sectaries oppoſe all parts of the Catholick Church ſaving their own: But the ungodly are againſt the Holy Catholick Church it ſelf; as it is *a Church*, and as it is *Holy*, they are againſt it. The Church is a Society combined for holy obedience to Chriſt: and the ungodly are againſt that holy Obedience.

The Sectaries would have no *Communion of Saints*, but in *their own way*. But the ungodly are againſt the *Communion of Saints in it ſelf*: for they are againſt the Saints that hold this Communion.

The

The Papists and Quakers are against our Ministry, and rail at them, and labour to bring them into hatred. So do the worser sort of the ungodly: even of them that say they are Protestants, of our own Religion. In their houses and in the Ale-houses, in their ordinary discourse, they are cavilling against the Ministers, or reproaching them: And some of them are more bitter haters and revilers of them, then almost any hereticks that we meet with: Yea some of them are glad to hear the Quakers and Anabaptists reproach them, and secretly set them on: Only they are ashamed to own these revilers, because they see them come off in the end with so much disgrace. But if they were but sure that Papists or Quakers, or any sect that is against a godly Ministry, had power in their hands to go through with their work, the mul-

titude of the ungodly among us would ſoon joyn with them. How plainly did this appear in our late wars? when few Miniſters of noted diligence and piety, that deſired to have lived at home in quietneſs, could be ſuffered to live among them; but the ungodly riſe up againſt them as if they had been Turks or Jews, and drove them into Garriſons to ſave their lives. The Separatiſts, and Quakers, and other ſects diſpute againſt the Miniſtry with cavils and railings; but the ungodly would diſpute them down with halters and hatchets, with fire and ſword, if the merciful Governour of the world did not tye their hands.

The Quakers and many Anabaptiſts and Separatiſts are againſt Tythes, and all ſettled maintenance of the Miniſtry. And do I need to tell you that the ungodly covetous worldlings are of the ſame mind? What

What need had Miniſters elſe to ſue for their Tythes? Were it not for fear of treble damages, the Miniſters in many Pariſhes of *England* ſhould not have bread to their mouthes, nor cloathes to their backs, before they got it by ſuit at Law. How commonly do they think that all is woon, and is currently their own, that they can but defraud the Miniſter of? If it were not that they are under diſgrace, the Quakers would ſoon have diſciples enow upon this very account, becauſe they are againſt Tythes. And gladly do the ungodly covetous people hearken to that doctrine, and get their books, and would fain have that opinion take as Orthodox. If the Prince, and Parliament would but turn Quakers, and cry down Tythes, yea and Miniſtry too, the miſerable ungodly multitude would quickly be of that Religion, and entertain their

Laws with ringing of Bells, and ſhowts, and bone-fires.

Another hereſie there is (even the old ſect of Anabaptiſts) that are againſt a Chriſtian Magiſtracy! And another hereſie (the Libertines) that would have the Magiſtrates give men leave to ſin. And are not all the Profane of the ſame Opinion? They *dare* not *ſpeak* ſo freely indeed againſt the *Magiſtrate* as againſt the *Miniſtry* (unleſs when they are up in arms againſt him) but their very hearts deteſt that Magiſtrate that takes part with godlineſs, and promotes Religion, and puts down Alehouſes, and puniſheth Swearers, and Drunkards, and Profaners of the Lords Day. They are commonly for the Doctrine that *Dell* preacht to the *Parliament*, that they ſhould *let Chriſt alone with Reformation, and let him do his work himſelf*: Or as another hath

hath written, that *he will never ſerve ſuch a God that is not able to defend his own cauſe without the Magiſtrates ſword.* The wretches might as well have ſaid [We will have no ſuch God as cannot Govern us himſelf without a Magiſtrate: or cannot defend us againſt enemies without wars: or cannot preſerve our eſtates without the charge and trouble of Law-ſuits: or ſave our goods or lives, without puniſhing thieves or murderers: or that cannot teach the world without Miniſters; or give us corn without plowing and ſowing: we will never ſerve ſuch a God as cannot preſerve our lives without meat, and drink, and cloathes; and lighten the world himſelf without a Sun.] God can do all this! But muſt theſe dunghill worms impoſe it on him, and give him a Law; and take down his creatures, and inſtitutions, and

means,

means, and bid him do all without them himself, or else he is no God. O wretched blasphemers! Why how much of this blasphemy are the ungodly guilty of, that hate the Magistrate or any other that executes Gods Laws, and would hinder them from sin, and drive them to the means that should make them better!

The Antinomians corrupt the doctrine of faith, and take it to be a Believing that their sins are pardoned, that Christ hath even repented and believed in their stead; and he that hath this belief they think is safe, and that a man cannot thus believe too much or too soon. And this is just the common Faith of the ungodly: They trust in Christ to save and pardon them, even without Sanctification or Conversion: and trust they will, let Ministers say what they can: Presumption is taken to be true believing,

believing, and by it they think to be ſaved. They believe that God will ſave them, and therefore they think they are true Believers.

The Antinomians ſay, that no man ſhould be diſcouraged from ſuch a belief by any ſin whatſoever. And this the ungodly hold and practice. The Antinomians hold that no man ſhould ſtay for any Evidences of Grace in himſelf, before he thus believe that he is a child of God, and Juſtified. And this the ungodly hold and practice. They believe and hope they are Juſtified and ſhall be ſaved, when they have not a word of proof for their hopes, nor any reaſon why *they* ſhould be ſaved more then the reſt of the world that will be condemned. Only they *believe* it and *hope* it, and that they think ſhall ſerve the turn.

The Antinomians are againſt Repenting

Repenting and Grieving for sin, and Confessing it, as a means of pardon. And I am sure the ungodly are practically against it. Repent, and mourn, and turn from sin, they will not; nor confess any more but what they know not how to deny; but as much as they can they will hide it, excuse it and defend it.

The Antinomians would not have one of their believers, if he fall into the grossest sins, to make the least question of his pardon and Justified state for that. And so is it with the ungodly: They will confess, when they swear, or are drunk, that they sin (because they cannot deny it:) but they will not believe that they are graceless and unpardoned: but all are sinners; and the best have their faults, and so have they: and this is the worst they make of their sin.

The

The Pelagians ſay that the will of man is ſo free, that he can turn and become a new creature at any time. And if this were not the Opinion of the ungodly, how could they put off Converſion, and ſay, Its time enough hereafter? but that it ſeems they think they can turn at any time, as if they had the Spirit and Grace of God at their command.

And yet they hold the contrary to this. (And this is no wonder: for there is a very Babel of confuſion in the ſoul of the unſanctified.) The Antinomians ſay, that man can do nothing to his own converſion, but is meerly paſſive: if God have Juſtified him before he was born, he ſhall be a Juſtified perſon; and if God will give him grace, well and good; if not, he cannot help it. Juſt ſo ſay many of the ungodly: [If we are elected we ſhall be ſaved: if not, let us

do

do what we can, we cannot be saved: if God will not give us grace, we cannot have it; and if we perish what remedy?] As if God did deny his Grace to any of you, but those that forfeit it by wilful sin? Or as if your wilful resisting of it were no fault or forfeiture: Or as if God did predestinate any besides the sanctified to salvation.

Abundance more such Heresies I might reckon up, that are all comprized in ungodliness. Some Infidels question the Immortality of the Soul: And so do many of the ungodly: I have heard some of them flatly deny it: and others of them do not well believe it.

Some Infidels question whether there be any Hell. And so do the ungodly in their hearts, or else they durst never so boldly venture on it, and so merrily live in the sudden danger of it.

Some

Some Infidels queſtion the Joyes of Heaven. And if the ungodly did not ſo in their hearts, they would not think an holy life too much ado to get it, nor would they part with it for the pleaſure of a filthy ſin.

There is never an Article of the Creed but ſome Heretick or other doth oppoſe it: And the ungodly are againſt them altogether, even while they profeſs to believe them all.

There is never a one of the ten Commandments, but ungodlineſs is againſt it. There is never a Petition in the Lords Prayer, but ungodlineſs is againſt it; for all that they are content to uſe the words. Inſtead of Hallowing the name of God, they diſhonour it, and inſtead of living to the Glory of God, they ſeek themſelves and their own honour. The Kingdom of Chriſt they are enemies

enemies to: In the Church without them, they love not his Government. In their hearts within, they will not endure it; and the coming of his *glorious* Kingdom they are afraid of. Instead of doing his will, they quarrel with it, and murmur at it, and disobey it, and do their own wills, and would have God do their wills too, and have all others do them. Instead of being content with daily bread to fit them for Gods service, they drown themselves in pleasures, or in worldly cares to make provision to satisfie their flesh. Instead of valuing and accepting the forgiveness of sin, as purchased by Christ and offered in the Gospel, they have slight apprehensions of so great a mercy, and refuse the conditions of it as too hard, and run deeper into debt, and wilfully sin more. Instead of avoiding Temptations, and flying to Christ for de-

deliverance from evil, they tempt themselves, and run into Temptations, and seek after them; and love the evil of sin, and are loth to leave it and be delivered from it. So that they are against every Petition in the Lords Prayer, though they use the words.

They are also against every Ordinance of God, and lick up the vomit of all sects that do oppose them. One sect is against the Lords day: and so are the ungodly against the sanctifying of it, and spending it in holy worship, and delighting themselves thereon in God. Else what need so many Acts to restrain them from sports and other profanation of it? And all will not do.

Another sect is against Praying but by the Book, and would have Ministers restrained from praying in any other words, then are commanded him. And the ungodly easily

easily receive this opinion, and reproach all other prayers as extemporate and disorderly.

Another sect is against Church Government by any but Magistrates; these are called Erastians. And the ungodly are not only against it, but detest it, and reproach it. Let them be called to Publick Repentance and Confession for any publick sin, and try whether they be not against this discipline. I know no outward duty that they are more against. They will hear us Preach with some patience and quietness: but when we come to reprove them personally, and recover them from scandalous sins by necessary discipline, they storm and rage against us, and will not endure it.

Some Separatists are for the Peoples Governing of the Church by a major Vote; and Consequently ruling those that God doth call their

their Rulers, and commandeth them to obey, *Heb.* 13. 17. And so are the ungodly; they would rule their Rulers, the Ministers, and have them administer the Ordinances of God according to their fancies; but they will not be ruled by them: Let the Minister but require them to come to him to be instructed or Catechized, and they will not be ruled by him, they are too old to be Catechized: Let him call them to any necessary profession or other duty, and they will do what their list. Let him but cross any of their conceits and customs, and they will sooner revile him then be ruled by him.

The Separatists will withdraw themselves from our Churches and Gods Ordinances, if things be not suited to their mind. And so will many of the ungodly. Most Parishes in *England*, that I hear of, where any kind of Discipline is exer-

exercised, have more Separatists then Communicants. The far greater part of many Parishes, forbear the Communion of the Church in the Lords Supper, and have done many years together; even because they cannot be admitted without examination, or without some necessary or lawful profession, or because they cannot have the Sacrament kneeling, or put into their hands, or the like: They will separate and be without the Sacrament, or take it in a separate society, rather then they will be ruled by the Pastors of the Church in a gesture or undoubtedly lawful thing.

Another sect of late will not sing *Davids Psalms*: And the ungodly will not do it heartily and reverently, but only with the voice.

Another sect (the Anabaptists) are against Baptizing Infants. And the

the ungodly do not holily and heartily devote themselves and their infants to God: they do not themselves renounce the world, the flesh and the devil, and take God for their God, and Christ for their Saviour, to heal and rule them, and the Holy-Ghost for their Sanctifier to make them holy: and how then can they do this for their children, which they refuse themselves? When they have offered their children to God in Baptism, they bring them to the flesh, and the world, and the devil in their lives, and teach them to break the Covenant which they made. So that they are far worse then Anabaptists.

Another late sect will not Pray morning and evening in their families, nor crave Gods blessing on their meat, nor teach children and servants the duties of Religion; And so is it with the ungodly: How

How many of you that hear me to *day*, have prayerleſs families? that let your people go about their labours as an Ox to the Yoak, without calling upon God? How few uſe to inſtruct and admoniſh their families, and help to prepare them for death and judgement? All that are about you, may ſee that you are guilty of this hereſie.

Another ſect alate is riſen up, that will not keep any conſtant times of prayer neither in family or in private, but only when they find themſelves in a good mood, then they will pray. And ſo is it with many of the profane.

I am aweary of mentioning theſe deſperate errours: More of them might be mentioned; and the caſe made plain, that almoſt all the Hereſies in the world are met together in the ungodly and unſanctified.

Would you ſee the ſumme of all my

my charge, in order? It is this: 1. Many sects that trouble us much, do yet hold no errours but what may stand with Christianity and Salvation. But the ungodly err in the Essentials, and overthrow the very Foundation of Religion. Their errours will not consist with grace or salvation: They are damnable heresies. Yea beside all that the sects aforesaid hold, they have many damning heresies of their own. These deadly hereticks hold, that the world is rather to be sought then everlasting Glory; that the pleasure of sin is to be chosen before the Holiness of the Saints: that their flesh is to be pleased before God; that its better venture on their beloved sins, and keep them yet a little longer, then presently forsake them; that the way to heaven which God commandeth, and Christ and all his Apostles went in, is Puritanism and

preciſeneſs; and godlineſs is more ado then needs; and that the body muſt have more care and diligence then the ſoul; and the trifles of this world be more looked after then the one thing neceſſary!

Theſe and abundance ſuch damnable Hereſies do dwell in our Cities and Countries, in the minds of thoſe that cry out againſt hereſies. Ungodlineſs is the greateſt Hereſie in all the world.

2. Other Hereticks have ſome of them but one or two errours, but the Ungodly have all theſe together: They are the ſink of all errours: As all Gods Graces make up the new creature in the ſanctified; ſo all deadly errours and vices go to make up the body of ungodlineſs, when it is compleat. Its name is Legion; for there are many of theſe evil ſpirits in it. The Anabaptiſt hath a ſcab; and the

the Separatiſt hath a wound; but the common ungodly multitude have the leproſie, and plague-ſores from top to toe.

Profaneneſs is a hodge-podge and gally-mawfry of all the hereſies of the world in one.

3. Many other hereticks do err but in *Speculation*, and only the *brain* is infected, and they do not at the *heart digeſt* their own miſtakes. But the Hereſies of the Profane ungodly people are *Practical*, and have maſtered the will: the Poyſon is working in the heart and vital parts; ſo that it is far the more mortal for this.

4. Many ſects at leaſt do not Practiſe their errours; but the ungodly live upon them. Yea their lives are worſe then their opinions: they ſay bad, and do worſe. You may *ſee* more Hereſie, then you can *hear* from them.

5. Some erring perſons have

the ſubſtance of Chriſtian truth mixt with their errour, by which the power of the venom is abated, and they do good in the Church as well as hurt : But the ungodly do not ſavingly, heartily and practically hold faſt any the moſt fundamental truth.

6. Some ſects are *meek and temperate* in their way. But the ungodly are carried on with *fury and malice*, againſt the whole body of the Holy Catholick Church.

7. And ſome Hereticks are ſo *thin and few*, that where we have *one* of them to do hurt, we have an *hundred* or a *thouſand* to contradict them. But the unſanctified and ungodly are the *greater number*, and think they ſhould rule becauſe they are the moſt ; and the flock of Chriſt is a little flock. And ſo many thouſands ſwarming all over the world, and making up the far greateſt part of the world,

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is like to do more againſt truth and peace, then here and there a poor Sectary in a corner.

8. And laſtly, the errours of ſome others are *eaſier cured* · but the whole nature of the ungodly is turned as it were into errour ; it is rooted ſo at the heart, that no power on earth is able to cure it, till God Almighty by inſuperable light and life of grace will do the cure.

And now I beſeech you, judge impartially who they be that are the deadly and dangerous hereticks : and who are the hinderers of Unity in the Church. And how unfit theſe miſerable people are to *call* for *Unity*, and cry out againſt our *many Religions*, who are *heartily of no Religion* themſelves, but *againſt* the *life and practice* of *all*. To hear an ungodly man go crying out of *Sects*, of *Separatiſts*, of *Anabaptiſts*, and

this and that; is as if we ſhould hear a *Blackamore* ſcorn one for a ſpot on his face; or a murderer rebuke a man for an angry word; or a Souldier that kills as many as he can, cry out of the Surgeons for curing no more, or blame others for a foul word; or a common whore reproach another for a wanton word, or uncomely garments: Or as if a mad man ſhould revile men for every ſlip he findeth in their ſpeeches, and call them fools. O that we knew how to caſt out this maſter Devil of *Ungodlineſs* ! this Beelzebub the Prince of Devils ! and then I ſhould not fear the reſt; no not all the ſects and errours in the world that are found with true godlineſs.

Yet ſtill remember theſe two cautions. 1. I do not excuſe the errours of the beſt: and I lament that they have lamentably wrong-

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ed the Church, and in some respects they have the greatest aggravations. 2. And I still confess that some of the unsanctified are so civil and Orthodox, as to be very useful in the Church, and helpful against sects and heresies: because they are right in the brain as to speculation, and right in the tongue; and their errour is kept buryed deep in the heart, and therefore they err more to themselves then to others. I doubt not but many such are profitable Preachers and defenders of the truth; and the Church must be thankful to God for their gifts. And yet all that I have affirmed standeth good, that Ungodliness is the transcendent Heresie and Schism.

Use 2.

BY what hath been said you may easily perceive, how little cause the Papists, or Ceremonious, or any others, have to glory in such members of their Churches as I have described. Can they expect a Unity of the Spirit with these? If they glory that they have men and multitudes on their side, so may the Turks that have more then they: and so may the Heathens that have more then either. And yet when a Papist hath deceived a poor licentious, or ignorant man, or a proud or vitious silly woman, they glory in their Convert. Never yet did I know any Protestant turn Papist, that was not an ungodly wretch before, and without the power of the Religion which he

he profeſſed. Do not ſay I ſpeak cenſoriouſly or uncharitably in this; for I think upon conſideration all Papiſts will confeſs it: For they teach that all that be not of their Church are void of charity, and cannot ſo be ſaved: and that all muſt therefore come in to their Church, becauſe there is no Charity or Salvation without it. Though this be falſe, yet you ſee by it that they confeſs that never any but graceleſs unſanctified Proteſtants did turn to them: Nor can they invite any to them but ungodly people. And who ever turneth Papiſt, doth thereby confeſs that he was ungodly before, and that he was not an honeſt godly man. For in turning Papiſt, he profeſſeth to go into that Church out of which there is no ſalvation, and conſequently no Charity or ſaving grace. And if indeed you deſire none but the ungodly to

turn to you, take them if they will needs go, and try whether you can do any more good on them then we have done. I think we have little cauſe (but for their own ſakes) to lament our loſs of ſuch as theſe : and that you have little cauſe to glory in your Proſelites. And I have yet ſeen none that ſhew us any more Holineſs ſince their change, then they had before. A fair Church you have, that is the common ſtie for all that will come to you; and that is glad of any to make up the number, that you may have that in quantity, that is wanting in quality.

Uſe 3.

Use 3.

FRom hence also let Quakers, and Papists, and all reproachers of our Churches take notice, how groundlesly they hit us in the teeth with the ungodly that live among us. [*These are your Protestants*, say they; *These are your Churches: These are the fruit of your Ministry*! say the Quakers.] No; these are the *enemies* of our Ministry and Doctrine: These are they that joyn with *you*, and such as *you*, to *reproach* us and *revile* us! These are the *obstinate despisers* of our Ministry; that instead of learning of us do revile us; and instead of obeying our doctrine do make a mock at it. If they are any of them brought to a found confession, and restrained from any vice, they may

may thank the doctrine which we preach for that (unleſs they do it only for fear of the Laws.) But their profaneneſs is it that we have endeavoured to cure them of, and cannot; for they are obſtinate.

If *Papiſts* or *Quakers* accuſe our Doctrine as dead and weak, becauſe it cannot cure all our hearers; What forgetful dotards are they that obſerve not how they condemn themſelves? Do the *Quakers* or *Papiſts* change *us all* to *their* opinions by their books or preaching? Beyond Sea they are fain to keep men in their Church by fire and ſword for fear of loſing them: and here, it is but here and there an ignorant ungodly wretch, or a proud raw novice, that turns to them.

You may therefore as well hit us in the teeth with your ſelves that revile us and ſay, [*We are the*

fruit

fruit of your Miniſtry] as with the ungodly, and tell us that [they are the fruit] of our Miniſtry. For though they live among us, they are not of us. And we teach men no more to be ungodly, then to be Quakers or Papiſts. If you ſay, that they are in our Churches; I anſwer, where Diſcipline is exerciſed, the moſt of them are out; and the reſt we weed up as faſt as they ſo diſcover themſelves, that we may do it without danger of pulling up the Wheat with them. Many of us reject them by Diſcipline: and all of us rebuke and diſown them by doctrine. If Jews and Heathens were among us, we could not preach more againſt them, then we do againſt the ungodly; nor could we labour harder to cure them. Tell *us* not therefore of them: they are none of *ours*: they diſown us, and we diſown them: They are our perſecu-

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tors as you are, that hate us when we have done our beſt for them, and love us leaſt when we love them moſt; and caſt back all our inſtruction in our faces, or caſt it behind their backs and tread it under feet. They are thoſe againſt whom we ſhake off the duſt of our feet: They are not our Diſciples; but ſuch as refuſe to be Chriſts own Diſciples.

Nay I wonder that Papiſts and Quakers do not to their ſhame obſerve, that it is like to be ſome evil Spirit that ſets them awork to rail againſt us; ſeeing all the *Drunkards*, and *Whore-mongers*, and covetous wretches, and ungodly malicious people in our Pariſhes be of their mind, and rail againſt us as they do: Its like to be the *ſame cauſe* that hath the *ſame effect*. If it be the Devil that ſets the Profane to revile us, judge who it is that ſets theſe ſects to

ſpeak

ſpeak the ſame or like words againſt the ſame perſons.

And you that are Profane and ungodly, I pray you here take notice what a caſe you are in! You are ſo vile that few beſides your ſelves will own you. *We* diſown you: You are none of ours; becauſe you will be none of Chriſts. And the very *Quakers* and other ſects diſown you, and hit us in the teeth with you, as if you were *our* ſhame: All theſe bear witneſs againſt your ungodlineſs: And therefore if yet you will be ungodly, when Quakers are againſt you, and all are againſt you almoſt as well as we; if you will hear neither Miniſters nor Sectaries, neither Teachers nor Railers, how many witneſſes will riſe up againſt you, and how ſpeechleſs will you be?

Uſe 4.

Use 4.

I Have been all this while but about preparatives : and now I come to the work that I intended. Do not think that I have ſpoken all this of the ungodly to hinder a Union and Chriſtian Concord, but to prepare for it, by telling you the reaſon of our diſtance, and diviſion, and what muſt be removed before we can be One. Truly Sirs, I come to you with peaceable intentions. I come upon a treaty with you, to ſee whether you will become One with us, and be reconciled or not ? For the Lords ſake attend me conſiderately and impartially, for it is a weighty buſineſs that I have to propound to you, and a moſt excellent motion that I have to make. As you regard

gard the God of Unity that ſends to you, and Chriſt the Prince of Peace, and the Spirit who is the Principle of Unity, and the Church that is the ſeat of Unity, and your ſelves that may have the bleſſing of Unity, hearken to the motion of Peace and Unity that I have to make to you from the Lord. Sirs, What think you! hath the world been long enough divided or not! Are we cut into ſhreds enow, and broken into pieces enow or not? Are our diſtances from one another great enough, and our ſpirits bitter enough or not? Is it not time think you to ſound a retreat to our fooliſh wars? You call for Unity: You talk for Unity, and againſt ſects and diviſions: Do you mean as you ſpeak? and are you in good ſadneſs, or are you not? Would you have us to be all of one mind and way, or not? You talk againſt being of ſo many Religions: Is it

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the true desire of your hearts that we should be all ~~of one~~ Religion? If it be, hold fast to this: So far we are agreed: Let us lay this as a ground-work; *We must be all of One Church, One Faith, One Religion, if we will be saved.*

Well then, it lyes next before us in order to enquiry, What One Religion and Way we must be of? and what is our distance, and what course must be taken to make us One? Are you willing to lay by passion, and scorn, and hatred, and bitterness, and come to a treaty about the matter? O Sirs, if you were but all truly willing to search out the business, and to be ruled by God and reason, we should soon be agreed, for all our differences. And how happy would this be for the troubled Church? How happy for the offended distracted world? how happy for your own souls? Well! what terms shall we agree upon?

upon? Some body must begin the motion; sitting still will not heal us. I will make a motion that never a man of you that hath the face of a Christian, can tell what justly to accept against. Let us set the *Word of God before us*, and take the best helps on both sides to understand it, and let this decide the case with us: What say you? will you stand to *the Word of God?* Shall we appeal all *to Christ*, and try our differences by *his revealed word?* If this may carry it, we shall soon be agreed.

But if any of you have catcht the Popish perverseness, and say [The Scripture is dark, and a dead letter; every sect pleads Scripture for their way; this will not serve our turn; we must have a living Judge] I answer such a one as followeth. 1. Is the Scripture the Law of God or not? If you say *Not*, you may as well say you are Infidels.

Infidels. If you confeſs *it is*, then it muſt have the *uſe of* a Law. And, 2. Muſt not ſubjects underſtand a Law to live by it, though they be not Judges? And when eſtate and life depends on our obedience to the Law; if this Law now be ſo dark that the ſubjects cannot underſtand it, then it is no Law, as not being capable of the uſe and ends of a Law. And ſo if our ſalvation or damnation lye on our obedience to Gods Word and Law, its an intolerable reproach to God and it, to ſay it is ſuch as we cannot underſtand. 3. Muſt we not be judged by this Law? Undoubtedly we muſt. And then ſhould we not meaſure our Cauſes by it now? 4 May not Arbitrators make uſe of a Law to decide a controverſie, before it come to the judge? Doubtleſs they may. 5. What Judge would you have? There are but two in the world that pretend

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to be the Universal Infallible Judge of controversies: and that is *the Pope, and a General Council.* For a *General Council*, there is none now in the world, nor like to be to the end of the world: God forbid we should defer our Peace till then. And its Decrees are as dark, and much more uncertain then the word of God. And for the *Pope*, he is the Head of a sect or party, and therefore not fit to be judge: you may well know he will judge on his own side. He must be judged by this word of God himself. He is too far off, of all conscience, for us to go or send to. Where *Rome* is, the most of you know not: A shorter journey may better dispatch our work. The Papists themselves tell us that many Popes have been Murderers, Adulterers, Simonists, perjured persons, and some Hereticks and Infidels. And must such as these be

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our *only* Judges? They have erred oft already, and therefore they may deceive us: And if you send for the Popes Sentence, you must take the Messengers word that he was there, and that its true.

But yet if all this will not serve turn, I will make a motion that none can gainsay that hath the face of a Christian. *Let us first agree in all those points that Papists and Protestants, Calvinists and Lutherans, Arminians and Anabaptists, and Separatists, and all parties that deserve to be called Christians, are agreed in!* What say you, is not this a Reasonable motion! O happy you, and happy the places where you live, if you would but stand to it!

And let us consider of this motion first in the General state of our difference, and then in the particular parts of it!

Truly Sirs, the main difference in

n this world is between the *Godly* and the *Ungodly*; and all other differences that are not parts of this, are nothing to this, being of leſſer danger, and eaſier toleration or cure. The whole world is divided into two Armies: Chriſt is the Captain General of one, and the Saints only his true Souldiers, and the ſeeming Saints his ſeeming Souldiers: The Devil is the General of the other, and all the unregenerate or ungodly are his Souldiers. An enmity is put ſince the beginning between the ſeed of the woman and of the Serpent, *Gen.* 3.15. and there is no middle ſtate, nor one man on earth that is not in one of theſe Armies. I come not to reconcile the Commanders, *Chriſt* and *Satan*; for they are unreconcileable; but to reconcile you to Chriſt, and draw you from a deceiver. I tell you, Sirs, this great difference between the holy

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and the unholy, is the firſt that muſt be healed. We can go no further with you, if you will not begin here at the heart of the difference. When this is done, you ſhall ſee before I have done with you, that I will quickly tell you how we may do well, for all our other differences. You know if one of us believe that there is a God; and another that there is none, it were foolery for us to diſpute how God muſt be worſhipped, before we are agreed that there *is* a God. So here; when it is the nature of ungodlineſs to make men falſe to the very truths that they do profeſs, and heartily to be of no Religion at all, it is in vain to diſpute about circumſtances and modes with ſuch kind of men. Who would diſpute whether Infants ſhould be baptized, with a man that knows not what Baptiſm is? [*Even an accepting of God for our God,*

God, and Christ for our Lord and Saviour, and the Holy Ghost for our Sanctifier; and an absolute delivering up our selves to the blessed Trinity in these relations, by a solemn Covenant professed and sealed by water, renouncing the flesh, the world and the Devil.] O were but this much practically known, we should be all United in this one Baptism. Still I say, Unholiness is the great point of difference, and the dungeon of Confusion, and puddle where all the heresies of the world are blended and made into a body that is something worse then heresie. When you cry up Unity, and cry down Holiness, you are distracted and know not what you say. You talk of joyning us together, and you cast away the glue and soder. You talk of building the Church in Unity, and you cast away the lime and morter, the pins and nails, and all that should fasten

them. You complain that the garment of Christ is rent, and you throw away the needle and thred that should sow it up. You see our wounds and blood, and take on you to have pitty on the Church, and call for healing, but you hate and cast away the only salve. Do you not yet know that the Churches Unity is a Unity of the Spirit, and of Holiness? and that there is no way in the world for us and you to be United, unless you will be Sanctified, and live in the Spirit, as you have done in the flesh?

Sirs, let us come nearer the matter: I know our Towns and Countries have two sorts of persons in them; some are Converted, and some Unconverted; some holy, and some unholy; some live for heaven, and some are all for earth; some are ruled by the Word of God, and some by their own flesh or wills. If ever these agree and be United, one

one party must come over to the other. Either the Godly must become ungodly, or the ungodly must become Saints and godly: Which must it be? which do you think in your Consciences is the way? Must we yield to you; or should you come away to us? (Pardon that I number my self with the sanctified; for I dare not deny the mercies of God, and the priviledges of his house) Let us come fairly to debate the Case, and lay our Reasons together; and I will here protest to you, if you can give us better reasons why we should forsake a godly life, I'le turn to you: and if we can give you better reasons why you should embrace an holy life, will you here promise to turn to us? and let them carry it that have the better cause, and let us be resolved to go away United; and fall all together into that one way that shall be proved to be the best.

Well, let us come to a debate, and see whether we must come to you, or you to us.

1. If we ever agree and unite, you know it must be on *terms that are possible.* He that propoundeth *Impossibilities* to be agreed on, is the *enemy* of agreement. But it is *impossible* for *us* to come to *you*, and so to Unite with you. This I now prove. 1. It is *Impossible* to have any *Universal Unity* but in an *Universal Head and Center*, and that is only God, the Father, Son, and Holy-Ghost. As I told you, the Army must Unite in the General, the Kingdom in the Soveraign, the Family in the Master, the School in the School-master. In order of Nature, you must Unite with God in the Redeemer by the sanctifying Spirit, before you can Unite with us. But while you are unsanctified you are divided from God. Do you not feel your minds

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ſtrange to him, your hearts draw back from him, and find by his ſtrangeneſs to you that there is a diviſion? Its impoſſible for us to be United to you, till Chriſt be United to you. For, 1. Its againſt Nature, ſeeing he is the Center, and the Head and Fountain of Life: And what good would it do you to be one with us and not with him? 2. God is againſt any Unity without *him*: If you will not begin with him, he will take it but as a treaſonable conſpiracy, and will break it. We dare not go without him, leſt he be angry and deſtroy us: Souldiers muſt not make either Peace or war, nor ſo much as treat without the General. Do you not remember how *Jehoſaphat* had like to have ſped by a friendſhip and confederacy with *Ahab*?

2. Moreover the Godly and ungodly are of *contrary natures*: I

told you God hath put an enmity between them. You must change your nature or we ours, before we can Unite. You may as well think else to Unite fire and water, or to build in the air, or to incorporate fire and Gun-powder; or to reconcile men and serpents; and marry the dog and the bear together. Sirs, these things are meer impossibilities. 2 *Cor.* 16. 14. There is no agreement between Christ and Belial, righteousness and unrighteousness, light and darkness, death and life, the members of Christ, and the members of an harlot or a drunkard, or such like: We have contrary spirits; how then can we be One? One hath the Spirit of holiness, and the other the Spirit of profaneness; One is led by the Spirit of God, and the other by the flesh: We live not by one Law. Gods will revealed in his Word is Our Law: and the will of the

the flesh and the course of the world is your Law. We live not on one sort of food; how then can we accord together? Christ and his heavenly truth, and holy Spirit, and Ordinances, is the meat and drink of the Saints: they cannot live without them: And the world and fleshly delights are your food; you cannot be without it. Your food would be our poyson; your worldly cares, your drunkenness, and profaneness would be a torment to an honest heart. They cannot live without some Communion with God in Faith and Love by Prayer and Meditation: and your heart is against it. They have not the same end as you have. Their work is all for Heaven, and yours is all principally for earth. Their work and yours are contrary. They go one way, and you another. So that its *Impossible* to be United and agree, till one side change.

And *we* cannot possibly turn to *you*: God holds us fast by his Love and Spirit, and will not let us go, nor suffer us ever to be *willing* to go. Do you not read Christ telling you, that its impossible to deceive the Elect? that is, so far as to turn them away from Christ. We are kept by the mighty power of God through faith to salvation, *1 Pet.* 1. 5. And who can break away from the upholding arms of Almighty power? Christ hath such hold of us that he is resolved none shall take us out of his hands, *Joh.* 10. 28. So that we cannot come over again to you.

But you may come over to us if you will. God calls you, and Christ would welcome you, and the Holy Ghost would help you: the door is set open by the blood of Christ: the promise is to you and to your children, that you may and shall have Christ and life if you will

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come in, and accept the offer. The Devil cannot hinder you againſt your wills; he holds you but in the fetters of your own wilfulneſs, by his meer deceits. Seeing therefore that *you may* come over to the ſanctified, and *they cannot poſſibly* come to *you*, let any reaſonable man be judge on what terms we ſhould unite and agree.

2. Moreover if we Agree, it muſt be *on terms of wiſdom and honeſty*. A *diſhoneſt Agreement* is not to be deſired, but abhorred. For *you* to leave your ungodlineſs, and turn to the Love and Fear of God, is an *honeſt* courſe of Agreement; for it is but to leave *diſhoneſty* it ſelf and become honeſt. I hope none of you dare charge the way of God and godlineſs with any diſhoneſty: God calls you to nothing but what is holy, and juſt, and good: and therefore Honeſty requireth you to yield.

But for the ſanctified to becowe unſanctified ; for the Godly to become ungodly, to be one with you, this were the baſeſt diſhoneſty in the world. We know your way to be of the Devil and the fleſh ; and is it honeſt then to joyn with you in it ? We have tryed too long already in the daies of our ignorance, and have found it diſhoneſt and deceitful ; and would you have us go againſt our own experience? We were once in the way that you are in, and were forced to renounce it, or elſe we had been undone body and ſoul for ever ; and ſhould we lick up the vomit which we were forced to caſt out? we were once Agreed with you, and God conſtrained us to break that Agreement : and ſhall we renew it again ? Alas, your way hath coſt us dear ; Many a bitter repenting day, and many a ſad thought, to the breaking of our

our hearts, and the very ſenſe of Gods diſpleaſure; a taſte of Hell was caſt into our conſciences; many a groan, and tear, and prayer it coſt us, before we could recover the hurt that we catcht in the way of ungodlineſs; and yet we have not fully recovered it to this day. And would you have us ſtark mad to forget ſo ſoon our former ſorrows, and turn to a life that hath coſt us ſo dear already? No, we have paid too dear for it, and ſmarted too much for it, to go that way any more: It brought us to the very brink of Hell; and if we had but dyed in that condition, we had been damned at this hour; And would you be ſo unreaſonable as to wiſh us to go back again? No; by that time you know as much of an unſanctified ſtate as we do, you will run from it your ſelves as faſt as you can run; as the Iſraelites did from the cry of the com-

company of *Dathan* and *Abiram*, *leſt the earth ſhould ſwallow them up alſo*, *Numb.* 16. 34.

We are certain that the Lord whom we ſerve is the only God; and that he, and none but he ſhould rule us; and that we have grievouſly wronged him by diſobeying him ſo long. And yet would you have us again forſake him? If we ſhould lie in tears till we die, it were too little to ſatisfie his Juſtice for one of the ſins we have already committed; and if it had not been for the wonderful love and ſuffering of the ſon of God, we had been loſt for ever: And yet muſt we turn to this courſe again? God forbid. It was not ſo wiſe nor honeſt a courſe. *We our ſelves*, ſaith *Paul*, *were ſometime fooliſh*, *diſobedient*, *deceived*, *ſerving divers luſts and pleaſures*, *living in malice and envy*, *hateful and hating one another* (you hear how he calls his

his former life) *But after that the kindneſs and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteouſneſs which we have done, but according to his mercy he ſaved us, by the waſhing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt, Tit.* 3. 3, 4, 5. And ſhould *Paul* have turned a fool again, and be deceived and diſobedient again, to Agree with the reſt of the deceived world? O Sirs, we have ſeen that which you have not ſeen, and taſted that which you never taſted. Had you ſeen and taſted the Love of God in Chriſt, and the delightful hopes of eternal life, and felt the comfort of his ſervice, and the joyes of the Holy Ghoſt, you would never wiſh us to come back again to agree with you in ſin, but you would abhorr your ſelves the very thoughts of your former folly. Why, you may better perſwade a man to repent that he was born,

and

and to go into the womb again, then to perſwade us to repent that we are new-born, and return to our former ſtate of death. Death is not ſo ſweet to us; nor Hell, nor the wrath of God ſo lovely, nor ſin with all its pleaſure ſo deſirable, that we ſhould turn to them again for Peace with you. If we have ſcaped them *once*, and will not take that for a warning, to come there no more, we deſerve to pay for it.

Why Sirs, we have made a ſolemn Covenant with God, in the face of the Congregation in our Baptiſm, and oft renewed it in the Lords Supper, and vowed that we would be his, and abſolutely and unreſervedly his. And would you wiſh us to break ſo ſolemn a Covenant? What honeſty is in ſuch perfidiouſneſs? We have renounced the fleſh, the world and the devil; and ſhould we turn to them again

for

for Peace with you? O what a curſed Peace were that! Let me tell you, that we have not found God ſo bad a Maſter, as to forſake him for the ſake of you or any creature. We have tryed him, and found him better to us then all the world. He hath never given us cauſe to forſake him. And if we ſhould now after all the tryals of his love, turn back to the way of ſin and ungodlineſs, the Devil himſelf would charge us with diſhoneſty. What! muſt the godly turn drunkards, and worldlings, and haters of godlineſs to have Peace with *you*? Why you may next perſwade us even to turn Devils, that we may be reconciſed to you. The God that made us, hath forbid us upon pain of his hot diſpleaſure, to walk in your wayes. He ſaith to every one of us, as to *Jeremy*, 15. 19. [*Let them return unto thee, but return not thou unto them.*] And ſhould we obey God

God or men? Judge you whether. Why Sirs, are you so utterly unreasonable, as to wish us or any man living to love you better then God, or to regard you more then God, or obey you before God? Or should we be so much worse then mad, as to yield to you if you did desire it? Why what are *you* in comparison with the Almighty! O poor worms, that are even dying while you are speaking! that are but as bubbles ready to burst, when you are swelled to the highest in ungodly pride! That even while you are eating, and drinking, and making merry, are passing on apace to weeping and gnashing of teeth, and everlasting woes and lamentations! What should we regard such dust and dirt as you are before the glorious God! It were far greater wisdom and honesty, for your children to set up a dog or a toad, and say, This is more to be loved

loved and honoured then my Father. If a Traytor againſt an earthly Prince deſerve to be hang'd drawn and quartered; certainly that man that would forſake God and his Laws to pleaſe ſuch ſilly worms as you, did deſerve to be hang'd in the flames of Hell, and to be tormented by infernal fiends, and ground to powder by the wrath of the Almighty! Well! if you have eyes that can ſee, you may ſee now paſt doubt, that *we cannot turn to you that are ungodly*, with any wiſdom or honeſty in the world, nor without the higheſt madneſs and diſhoneſty. But can you ſay ſo of your turning in to us? Is it contrary either to Wiſdom or Honeſty for you to turn unfeignedly to God, and to become a ſanctified godly people? Me thinks you ſhould not have ſuch a thought in your hearts. And therefore if we be not all of a mind, and go not

all

all one way, it is moſt apparent that it is not long of us, but of you.

3. If we do *Unite* and *Agree*, it muſt be upon terms of *Safety*. This much I hope you cannot deny us. You would not ſure wiſh us to Agree to our own deſtruction, and to make a bargain with you that we may all joyn together in cutting our own throats? Do you think that this were a wiſe combination? How much leſs ſhould we make an Agreement to go the certain way to Hell, and to joyn together in damning our own ſouls for ever? Sirs, if you diſlike the way of Holineſs, do but find out any other way that will ſafely bring a man to heaven, and we will promiſe you to joyn in it. But unholineſs will never do it. God hath told us as plain as can be ſpoken, that *except a man be born again, and be converted, he cannot enter into the King-*

dom

dom of heaven, Joh. 3. 3, 5. Mat. 18. 3. *and that without holiness no man shall see the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. *and that the righteous themselves are scarcely saved*, 1 Pet. 4. 18. *and that if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are past away, and all things become new*, 2 Cor. 5. 17. and that *if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*, Rom. 8. 9. So that if God know who shall be saved, it is as certain as any thing in the world, that no unsanctified man can be saved. If leaping into the water be the way to drowning, or leaping into the fire be the way to burning, or leaping down from the top of a steeple be the way to break your necks, as sure is an unholy life the way to everlasting torment. And would you wish us to undo our selves everlastingly for your friendship? What can you say to this now? If you say that your way

way is not so dangerous, it is but our precise uncharitable conceit. We have shewed you the word of God for it; and fourty times more we could easily shew you! And shall we believe you or such as you before God? You are lyars; but God cannot lye. You see not what is done in another world; but God seeth it. You know not what is in Heaven or Hell: but God knoweth. And shall we not believe God that knoweth and disposeth of all, better then moles that never saw it, and ignorant souls that never knew it? God saith, that *Fornicators, Adulterers, Drunkards, Covetous persons, revilers, or the like, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6. 10, 11. and that *they that are in the flesh cannot please God*; and that *if you live after the flesh ye shall die*, Rom. 8. 5, 6, 7, 13. And would you have us believe you that there is no danger in a fleshly life? Sirs,

we

we desire heartily to be United and Agreed with you; but we are loth to buy it so dear, as the loss of God and heaven comes to. We are willing of Concord with you; but we are loth to be damned with you: And do you blame us for this? And, alas, if you should tell us a thousand times that you hope there is no such danger, or that you hope to scape as well as the godly, this is but poor security to us. Shall we be so mad as to venture our selves on such words as these against the Word of the Ruler of the world? What security can you give us that we shall scape damnation if we turn ungodly? Are you able to save us from the wrath of God? Will you undertake to stand between us and his displeasure? What say you? if we will forsake an holy life, and live as careless worldlings do, and neglect God and our souls, and please the

world

world and our flesh, will you undertake to answer for us in Judgement? and will you venture to bear the punishment that we should bear? If you dare not undertake to save us harmless, why will you perswade us to do as you do? Nay, if you would and make it, he were a mad man that would trust you, and venture his salvation upon such undertakings; for we know you are not able to make them good. Alas poor souls, how unable will you be to save *your selves*? or to pay out of Hell an hour longer, when Devils have Commission to carry you away? And shall we trust our souls upon your boasting words, when we know you are unable to help your selves? Let us see first what you can do for your selves or us, against the present hand of God. Can you keep off death, and rebuke diseases, and live here in health and

and wealth for ever, whether God will or no? How comes it to pass then that here is never a one of you near two hundred years of age? Let us see you chide back approaching death, and raise the dead bodies from their graves, and heal all the diseases that cut off mankind: If you cannot do these smaller matters, would you have us believe that you can save us from damnation? Why, Sirs, must your neighbours lie some of them in poverty, and some in pain, some sick of one disease, and some of another, and you look on them and cannot cure them or relieve them, and yet must we venture our souls upon your words! You cannot make an old man young again; and can you make the word of God prove false, or save those that God hath said shall perish, and bring unsanctified men to heaven whether God will or no? Well,

Sirs,

Sirs, let them that hate their souls, or care not whether they are saved or damned, forsake the Lord and an holy life, and joyn with you, and see whether you can save them: But for my part I believe the Word of God, and upon this Word only I am resolved to build my hopes, and venture my soul and all that little that I have in this world: Trust you on what you please, this shall be my trust: And they that can find a surer ground to build upon, let them take their course.

But I must tell you, that if you would wish us all to cast away God, and Christ, and heaven, to agree with you, you are monsters and not men; and if you are so cruel as to desire us to damn our souls for company, we must be so careful of our selves as to abhor your motion, and rather to hate the dearest thing or person in the world,

world, as they would draw us from Christ and everlasting life, *Luke* 14. 26.

You see then what it is that standeth in our way, to hinder us from turning back to you. But what danger would you be in if you should turn to us? Would it hurt or hazzard you to forsake your sensual ungodly lives? Is there any danger in turning to God, and living an holy heavenly life? What is the danger? Forsooth you may lose your estates or lives! A great matter indeed in comparison of eternal life: And must you not lose them shortly whether you will or not? And are they not in the power of God? and cannot he preserve them if he please? and if it be good for them, he is liker to do it for his own, then for his enemies! But indeed he hath told you himself, that *he that will save his life shall lose it, and he that loseth*

his life for his ſake, ſhall find it; even in life everlaſting, *Mat.* 16. 25. & 10. 39. And yet as the world now goeth in *England*, through the mercy of God, your lives are in no danger. It is but the ſcorn of ignorant miſerable men that you muſt endure. And will you ſtick at this, in the cauſe of God and your ſalvation? Nay indeed you are in moſt dreadful danger every day, and night, and hour, till you forſake your former fleſhly lives, and turn to Chriſt! You are all the while even within a ſtep of death and hell, till you are Converted and made an holy people; It is but one ſtroak of death to put an end to your lives and hopes, and you are gone for ever. So that you have nothing to loſe, but an Heaven to gain, if you joyn with the godly. There is no danger can come to to *you* by turning, unleſs it be the loſs of your ſins; and that is a loſs no

no more to be feared, then a man should fear to lose the plague, or pox, or leprosie that hath it.

Now I beseech you Sirs, as men of Conscience or of Reason, set both together, and equally consider how the case stands between us. If we joyn with the unholy, we run into Hell, and lose God, and Christ, and Grace, and Salvation for evermore: But if you turn to the Godly, you get out of danger, and make the gainfullest match that ever was made by mortal men; and you can lose nothing but the sensual pleasures of sin, which are but exchanged for the joyes of Saints, as sickness is exchanged for health. And which now do you think in reason is the fitter, that you turn to the godly, or they to you? Truly, if you make so great a matter of leaving your sins, which are viler then your dung, that you will ra-

ther break with God and us, you must give us leave to make so great a matter of leaving Christ and his holy wayes and people, that we will much rather break with you and all the wicked in the world, and with our carnal selves, and that which is most dear to them: And I think we have good reason for it.

4. Moreover, this must be considered in our treaty, that *if we agree, it is fit that our dearest friends be taken into the Agreement*: Should we cast off *them* to agree with *adversaries*, and leave our *old* friends in hope of *new*? But if we come over to *you*, and turn unholy, we shall never have Gods consent to the Agreement, we must leave him out, and utterly lose him: When, alas, we cannot live, nor move, nor breath without him! we cannot have our daily bread, or one nights rest but by his gift. And

such

ſuch a friend is not to be loſt for you. And we ſhall loſe the Lord Jeſus and the Holy Ghoſt, and the Communion of Saints, and the peace of our own conſciences. O what a peal would conſcience ring us night and day! It would open Hell to us: It would kindle the fire of Gods wrath in our boſoms; and be ſcorching us as we lie down and as we riſe up: And who would endure ſuch a life as this, for all the world? Its like it is not thus with you: but that is becauſe you know not what a caſe you are in, nor what a dreadful thing ungodlineſs is; bnt we know it: And therefore what ſhift ſoever you make to keep your conſciences aſleep, I know not how I ſhould quiet mine, if I were in your caſe, and knew but what I know of it.

But now if you will joyn with Chriſt and us, your true friends will be glad of it: you ſhould not loſe

one friend in the world by it, unleſs you take the Devil and his ſervants for your friends, that would deſtroy you. Judge then whether you ſhould come to us, or we to you.

5. Moreover, this muſt be conſidered in our treaty, that if we agree with you, we have *ſome* regard to our *Honour*. And what *Honour* is it to us to become the ſervants of ſin and the Devil, and be forſaken of God, and return to the ſlavery that lately we were delivered from? A hang-man is ten thouſand times more honourable then this.

But on the other ſide, if you will turn to Chriſt, you will come out of the greateſt ſhame, and obtain the greateſt honours that you are capable of: You will be the ſons of God, and heirs of heaven, coheirs with Chriſt, fellow-Citizens of the Saints, and of the houſhold

of

of God, *John* 1. 12. *Rom.* 8. 17. *Eph.* 2. 19. and be built up an habitation of God through the Spirit, *Eph.* 2. 22.

6. Moreover, this is most considerable in our treaty, that if we Agree, it must be upon *Universal terms* that *all* will agree upon; or else it can be no *Universal Agreement*. If a *few* should Agree with you, this would not make a Unity in the world. We must have terms that are fit for all to Agree upon. And in good sadness, would you have all the world be such as you? Tell me, you that are covetous and proud, would you have all the world become proud and covetous to Agree with you? Nay if they should, when they are likest you, they would not Agree with you: For the Proud will envy the Proud, and their Pride will set them together by the ears. And the covetous would be greedily snatching

the prey out of one anothers jaws, and their mammon would be the matter of their ſtrife. Tell me alſo you that are drunkards or unclean, would you have all the world become drunkards and unclean for Unity with you? You that are careleſs about your ſouls, and prayerleſs in your families, and forget the matters of everlaſting life, would you have all the world ſet as light by God, and Chriſt, and Heaven as you? Could the worſt of you all have the face to make ſuch a motion as this? What! would you have all Holineſs and heavenly-mindedneſs baniſhed out of the world, becauſe you have baniſhed it from your ſelves? Would you have all men ſhut their Bibles as much as you, and inſtruct their children and ſervants no more then you, and love God and ſerve him no more then you? Is it poſſible that ſuch an heart

heart as this can be in the breaſt of the worſt on earth ? What! would you have all the world be drunkards, or fornicators, or haters of godlineſs, or at leaſt unſanctified, becauſe you are ſo ! How quickly then would earth turn Hell, and the flames of the wrath of God conſume it ? How certainly then would God forſake the world, as a man would be gone from toads and ſerpents ? Can there be ſuch cruelty in any but the Devils, as to wiſh all the world to be damned with you for company, or to Agree with you on ſuch terms, that you may go hand in hand together to damnation! Or if you had ſuch Deviliſh hearts within you, as to deſire ſuch an Agreement as this, can you think that all the godly would yield to it ? No ; let me tell you, not one of them in all the world will yield to it. If *you* ſet no more by the Love of God, the

blood of Christ, the presence and comforts of the Holy-Ghost, and the Hopes of Glory, yet *they* do, and *will* do. If *you* will run into Hell, you shall never get them thither with you for company.

But on the other side, there is nothing in the way of Holiness, but what is fit for *all men* to Agree upon. I know *All will not*; and therefore we expect not an Agreement with all. But that is their unhappiness. There is no fit means of Agreement but this.

7. Lastly, this also must be considered in our treaty; that we Agree upon terms that are *like to hold*, and not to be repented of hereafter. For what good will it do to Agree to day, and to break it or bewail it to morrow? Why, alas Sirs, we know as sure as we breath, that if we should Agree with you in unholiness, we should quickly

quickly Repent it, either by Grace, or in Hell-fire. Nay we know that you will Repent of those unholy wayes and hearts your selves, either by Grace or Judgement. Nay there are even now some kind of purposes in many of you to repent. I have heard abundance of ungodly men profess that they hope to repent hereafter, and mend their lives, and leave their sins. And would you wish us to come and joyn with you in a way that you hope to forsake your selves, and in a way that you purpose hereafter to Repent of? I know as sure as that the Sun will set, that every ungodly soul among you, will shortly change their false opinions; and they that derided the servants of Christ, would wish then they might but be door-keepers among them: You will wish and wish a thousand times that you had done as they did, and lived as holily as the

the best on earth: You will then wish, [*O that it were to do again! and that my life were again to be lived; and God would but try me on earth once more.*] Those tongues that railed against Religion, will a thousand times more reproach your selves for those reproaches, and the neglect of this Religion. You will then cry out [*Where was my wit and reason, when I made so mad a change, as of God for the creature, Christ for sin, and Heaven for Hell*] Do you think Sirs, that it were any wisdom for us to Agree with you now in that, for which you will fall out with your selves for ever? and to go with you in that loose ungodly way which you will wish your selves that you had never known?

Besides, we know that it is only the Saints that we must live with for ever; and therefore you must become Saints, if you would be

United

United to us here. What! Should we be so careful to Agree with you a while, and be separated from you eternally, or do worse by suffering with you! But if you will Unite with us in Christ and Holiness, this will be a lasting Unity; which you will never have occasion to repent of. The Union between the Lord Jesus and his members, shall never be dissolved. Heartily joyn with his servants now in the wayes of Holiness, and you shall certainly joyn with them in the state of Happiness, and in the joyful fruition and praises of the Lord.

Well Sirs, in this much of our treaty I have layed the case plain and open before you, and shewed you, that we cannot come over to you: It is not Possible, nor Honest, nor Safe; we cannot forsake an holy life without forsaking God, and our Redeemer, and our salvation, which no man that is a

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man indeed, should desire us to do; nor can we do it till we first forsake our understandings: But on your side the case is otherwise: You may turn to God and an holy life, without any hurt or wrong to you at all; nay it is the only way to your felicity, and if you do it not, you are undone for ever: So that the case is past all controversie before you, that there is no way in the world to Unity, but by Consent in Piety? If half the Common-wealth turn Rebels, and so shall make a Division in the body, the way to Unite them is by the returning of the Rebels to their Allegiance, and not for the true and lawful subjects to turn all Rebels and joyn with them. For without the *Head* there cannot be a Union. So that if the world be still divided and disagreed, it is not long of the godly, but of the ungodly: And if you would have

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an Agreement, its *you* that must yield, who *cause* the disagreement. You *may* do it, and *must* do it, or do worse; but the *godly may not* yield to *you*.

What say you now, would you have Unity or Division? Would you have Peace or no Peace? You complain that the world is of so many minds: Would you have them all reconciled and of one mind? If you would, let us see it. The work sticks with you; on your hands it lyeth, and it is you that must do it, if ever it be done. If you would have all *ungodly*, you deserve not to live on the earth. Shall we then without any more ado agree all upon a life of Holiness? O that our Towns and Parishes would all joyn together in this Agreement! and it must be this or none.

But perhaps some of you will say, *What need you make so many words*

words about a matter that no body doth deny? We all know we should be Holy and Godly, and none should be ungodly; who doubts of this? But the Question is, What Holiness and Godliness is? Tell us therefore what you mean by it, and who those be that you take to be the Godly sanctified people?

Answ. If we are all agreed of the *Necessity* of Holiness, then those that are not yet agreed *to be* Holy themselves, do sin against their own consciences, and condemn themselves in the things which they allow, and wilfully divide themselves from Christ and from his Church. And if any of you have been so long Baptized into the Name of the Holy-Ghost as your Sanctifier, and yet know not what Sanctification is, and who are to be accounted *sanctified* and *godly*, you shew that you have perfidiously cast away and broak your Cove-

Covenant with God ; and made but an ill uſe of your Baptiſm or any Means and Ordinances ſince. But if you know not who are godly or ungodly, I ſhall quickly tell you.

A godly man is one that being formerly in a ſtate of ſin and miſery, both ſtrange and backward to God, and heaven, and an holy life, and prone to earthly, fleſhly pleaſures, is now by the powerful work of the Word and Spirit of God , converted to unfeigned faith and repentance , broaken-hearted for his former ſin and miſery, flying to Chriſt as the only Hope and Phyſitian of his ſoul, and ſo is made a new creature, having his heart ſet upon God and everlaſting life, and contemning all the pleaſures of the fleſh and the things of this world in compāriſon of his hopes of Glory ; hating all known ſin, and not wilfully living in any ; and loving the

the higheſt degree of Holineſs, and willing to uſe the means that God hath appointed to deſtroy the remnants of ſin, and bring him nearer to perfection; This is a truly godly man.

And he that is not ſuch, is ungodly. He that yet remaineth in his Natural depraved ſtate, and is unacquainted with this great and holy change, that hath any ſin that he had rather keep then leave, and any that he wilfully liveth in; and wilfully neglecteth known duties, as one that had rather be free from them then perform them, and had rathet live a fleſhly life, then a ſpiritual and an holy life, and is more in love with the creature, then with God; with his life on earth in fleſh and ſin, then a life in heaven with God and his Saints in perfect holineſs; this man is undoubtedly a wicked and ungodly man, how civilly or religiouſly ſoever he may

ſeem

ſeem to live in the world. And ſo I have in a few words told you, who they be that are godly, and who are the ungodly. The Queſtion now that we are treating about, is, whether we ſhall all agree together to be godly? Do you not believe it to be beſt and neceſſary? If not, you are blind: If you do, let us agree on it without delay. You tell us with many great complaints of the many differences and diviſions that are among us: but ſhall we Agree ſo far as we are agreed? that is, ſhall we agree in heart and practice, ſo far as we are agreed in opinion and profeſſion? O that you would make a ſolemn Covenant, that you will but Conſent and go along with the Godly ſo far as you confeſs you ought to do; and would but Unite with us in faithfulneſs to the truths which you cannot deny. I think it will be beſt to call you to the tryal in ſome particulars.

1. I hope we are all Agreed that there is one only God that made us, and preserveth us, and Redeemed us: and therefore that we are wholly his, and should resign our selves and all that we have absolutely to him for his service. He is not worthy the name of a man, that denyeth this: And shall we all Agree now in the Practice of this much? Shall we wholly resign our selves and all that we have to God? and labour to know what God would have us be and do, and that let us resolve upon, whatever the flesh or the world say to the contrary. Were but this much well resolved on, we were in a fair way to a full agreement.

2. We are all Agreed in Opinion or Profession, that *this God is our only Happiness, and his favour is better then all the world*, and that he is infinitely Wise, and Good, and Powerful; and therefore that he must

must be Loved above all things whatsoever, and must be most feared, and served, and trusted, and depended on.

And shall we but Agree all in the *Practice* of *this much?* O that you would but heartily consent and do it! Did we but joyn together in Loving God above all, and fearing, and trusting, and serving him before all, we should quickly be of one heart and soul, and in a very fair way to a perfect agreement.

3. We are all Agreed (that professs Christianity) that sin hath made us miserable, and brought us under the wrath and curse of God, and that the Lord Jesus Christ having Redeemed us by his blood, is the only Physitian and Remedy for our souls, and having manifested such infinite Love in our Redemption, and also purchased Dominion over us, we are strongly

ſtrongly bound to Rejoyce in his ſalvation, and fly to him for Safety and reſt upon him, and live in the thankful admirations of his Love, and in careful Obedience to his gracious Laws.

And ſhall we all Agree in the Practice of this much? Will you fly to Chriſt with broken bleeding hearts, for ſafety from ſin, and wrath, and Hell, and ſet more by him then by all the world? Will you ſtudy with all Saints to comprehend his Love? *Eph.* 3. 18, 19. and admire him and his mercies, and devote your ſelves to him and be ruled by him? O that we were but all agreed in this much?

4. We are all agreed in Opinion or Profeſſion, that the Holy Ghoſt is the Sanctifier of Gods elect, or of all that ſhall be ſaved, and that except a man be born again by the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of heaven, and that with-

without holineſs none ſhall ſee God; and that no man is the Son of God, that hath not in him the Spirit of his Son, 1 *Cor.* 12.12,13. *Eph.* 4.5. *Joh.* 3.5,6. *Heb.* 12.14. *Rom.* 8.9. *Gal.* 4.4.

Were we but all ſuch now as we are agreed we *muſt* be, and would you but all Conſent to this Sanctification and newneſs of life, the great difference were healed, and the work were done.

5. Moreover we are all Agreed, or ſeem to be ſo, that the holy Scripture is the word of God, and of infallible truth, and therefore muſt be believed and made the Rule of our Judgements and our lives.

Shall we all agree now in the *practice* of this? Will you appeal to the Scripture! and ſhall it be our Rule? If the fleſh perſwade you to another courſe, and murmur at the ſtrictneſs of Gods Word;

Word; if cuſtom be againſt it, and the greater number be againſt it; if your profits, or pleaſures, or worldly honours be againſt it, and your former opinions and practice have been againſt it, will you yet believe the Scripture before all, and be ruled by it above all the world? You are agreed I hope that God is to be obeyed rather then men, or then the fleſh and the Devil? Will you reſolve that it ſhall be ſo? O if the Word of God might be the Rule, how quickly ſhould we be agreed? For all the Popiſh cavils at its difficulty, and mens divers expoſitions, yet how ſoon ſhould we be agreed?

6. We are all agreed in Opinion or Profeſſion, that there is a heaven for the Sanctified, even an endleſs unconceivable Glory with God, in the ſeeing of his face, and enjoying him in perfect Love and Joyes; and that the ſeeking of this everlaſting

everlasting Glory should be the main and principal business of our lives, which all things must give place to. He that will deny this, can have no pretence to call himself a Christian.

O that we might but all agree in the practising of this! and that the principal love and desire of our souls were set upon the Heavenly blessedness, and the chiefest of our care and labour might be laid out for the obtaining of it. Agree in this, and all will be agreed at last.

7. We are all Agreed in our profession, that there is an Hell, or state of endless torments, where all the finally unsanctified and ungodly must be for ever.

But why do we not agree in the diligent avoiding of such a dreadful misery, and using our best endeavours to escape it?

8. We are all agreed in Profes-

sion, that the flesh is our enemy, and must be mortified. But will you agree in the *practice* of this mortification? We are agreed in Profession, that the world is our enemy and must be contemned, and that it is a vain and worthless thing, compared with the Glory that is to come: But yet men will not agree to renounce the world unfeignedly, and to be strangers to it, and part with all rather then with God and a good Conscience: but while men speak contemptuously of the world, they seek it far more eagerly then heaven. We are agreed that the Devil is our enemy, and yet men will not forsake his service.

9. We are all agreed in profession, that sin is a most hateful thing, hated of God, condemned by his Word, and the only cause of the damnation of souls: And yet men love it, and live in it with delight.

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Shall we agree all to deal with ſin as we ſpeak of it? Will Magiſtrates, and Miniſters, and people joyn together, to baniſh it out of Town and Countrey? Particularly we are agreed I hope, that whoredom, and wantonneſs, and gluttony, and drunkenneſs, and ſtrife, and envying, and lying, and deceit, and curſing, and ſwearing, and railing, and backbiting, and ſpeaking againſt an holy life, are all groſs, hateful, damning ſins, which every Chriſtian muſt abhor. But why do you not agree in the hateing, and forſaking, and beating down of theſe ſins? But Town and Countrey ſwarmeth with them as a carkaſe doth with maggots, or a ſtinking pond with frogs and toads: So that Magiſtrates and Miniſters, puniſhments and perſwaſions, the Laws of the Land, and the Laws of God, can do but little to rid the Countrey of them;

but the ſame men that confeſs all theſe to be great and grievous ſins, will keep them and delight in them, as if it were in deſpight of God and man, or as if they bore a deadly grudge to their own immortal ſouls.

10. There is none of you that bears the face of a Chriſtian, but muſt agree with us in profeſſion, that *One thing is needful, and that we muſt ſeek firſt the Kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs, and labour moſt for the food that will not periſh. Luke* 10. 41, 42. *Matth.* 6, 33. *John* 6. 27. and that *God* ſhould *be loved with all our heart, and ſoul, and might*, and that no man can love him too much, nor ſerve him too carefully, nor be too diligent in the ſeeking of his ſalvation. Why then will you not all agree to do thus? But the very ſame tongues that confeſs all this, will yet ſpeak againſt the ſervice of God,

God, and call it Puritaniſm and preciſeneſs, and ſay its more ado then needs: Why Sirs, if you will ſay and unſay, there is no hold to be taken of your words, and therefore what agreement can be with you? Will you confeſs that all ſhould take more care for their ſouls then for their bodies, and take more care for heaven then earth, and yet will you not agree to do it, but rather ſpeak againſt them that do it, when you confeſs that it is beſt? Why, if you can agree no better with your ſelves, how can you agree with us? If your own opinions and profeſſion be at ſuch odds with your wills and practices, no wonder if you be at odds with others.

More particularly, I hope you will all confeſs, that it is the duty of all that can, to hear the Word of God, and frequently to read it, and labour to underſtand it, and to

meditate in it day and night; and for Parents daily to teach it their children at home and abroad, lying down and rising up: *Deut.* 6. 6, 7, 8. & 11. 18, 19. *Psalm* 1. 2, 3. and to pray in their families, and in private, even alwaies or frequently to pray, and not to wax faint, but in all things to make known their requests to God, that all things might be sanctified to them by the Word and Prayer. All this is plain in the Word of God, *Dan.* 6. 10, 11. *Luke* 18. 1. 1 *Thes.* 5. 17. *Psalm* 55. 17. 1 *Tim.* 4. 5. *Phil.* 4. 6.

But will you all agree with us in the practice of these things? Will all the Families in Town and Countrey agree together to pray morning and evening reverently to God, and to banish profaneness out of their doors, and to instruct their children and servants in the fear of God, and spend the Lords day in holy

holy exercises, and help one another to prepare for death and judgement, and exhort one another daily while it is called to day, lest any be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin? *Heb.* 3. 13.

To what purpose should I mention any more particulars, till we see whether you will Unite and agree in these? All these are your own Professions. I know you cannot deny any one of them; and yet we cannot perswade you to Consent with us in the Practice of what your selves profess: No, nor scarce to forbear the open opposing of it: Either resolve now that you will all agree with us in these things which you confess the Lord hath made your duty, or else tell us plainly that you are the deadly enemies of Unity and Peace, that we may take you to be as you are, and trouble our selves no more about you. If you are *resolved*

againſt Agreement and Unity, tell us ſo, and ſave us the labour of any further treaties with you. Talk no more childiſhly about our petty differences in ceremonies and forms of Worſhip, about Biſhops and Common-prayer Books, and Holy-daies, and ſuch like, as long as you refuſe Agreement in the main. There's a difference between you that is an hundred times greater then theſe; ſome of you are for Heaven, and ſome for Earth; ſome of you live to the Spirit, and ſome to the fleſh; ſome of you are hearing, reading or meditating on the Word of God, when others think it needleſs, and had rather have a pair of cards or dice in their hands; ſome of you make Gods Law your Rule, and ſome are Ruled by the world and the fleſh; ſome are drunkards, gluttons, wantons, worldlings; and ſome are ſober, temperate, chaſte and heavenly; ſome

ſome think almoſt any thing enough in the Worſhip of God, and for the ſaving of their ſouls; and others think the beſt they can do too little; and when they have done moſt, lament that they do no more; ſome Families uſe daily prayer, reading, and holy inſtructions; and others uſe daily ſwearing, railing, ribaldry, and perhaps deriding of holineſs it ſelf. In a word, ſome give up themſelves to God and Heaven, and others to the world, the fleſh and the devil; ſome are converted and become new creatures by the ſanctifying work of the Holy Ghoſt; and others are yet in the ſtate of nature, and never knew a true converſion.

This is the great *difference* of the world Sirs: Till *this* be healed, it is in vain to talk of the healing of our petty differences. And therefore once more I tell you, if

you will not be Converted to an holy life, and Unite with us on these terms, you are the enemies of Peace and Unity, and the great Incendaries of the world.

AND now having proceeded thus far in the treaty with you, because I will either bring you to Agreement, or leave you at least without excuse, I will here annex some further Reasons to move you, if it may be to so happy a work.

1. Consider I pray you, that if you will not agree with us in the things that you make profession of, and confess to be your duty, you are then treacherous and false to God, and to your selves, and therefore not fit for any to make Agreement with, till you change your minds. Do you know that God

God is best, and yet will you not Love him better then the world? Do you know that Heaven is the only happiness, and yet will you not seek it more then earth? Do you know that an holy life is best, and yet will you be unholy? Do you know sin is the worst and most dangerous thing in the world, and yet will you not let it go? Who will trust such men as you, that will go against their own knowledge and confessions? If you will be false to God, and false to your own souls, no wonder if you be false to us.

2. Moreover all your pretended desires of Unity and Concord are base *hypocrisie*, as long as you refuse to Unite with us in the way and state of holiness: To take on you that you are troubled at the Divisions of the world, and to wish that we were all of one Religion, and to talk against sects and opin-

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ons as you do, is meer self-condemning, and such gross dissembling as expoſeth you to shame. What! would you have us think you are against Divisions, when you divide from God, and Christ, and the Holy Ghost, from the Scripture, from the holy Catholick Church, and from the Communion of Saints? Can you for shame say that you are for Unity and Agreement, when you are dividing from us, and will not agree with us, unless we will be as mad as you, and damn ~~our~~ fouls for company with you? To hear these ungodly men talk against sects and divisions in the Church, is as if we heard a man that hath the leprosie cry out against those that have the itch, or a murderer chide another for foul words.

3. And I must tell you while you remain ungodly, you are the great Hereticks and Separatists that trouble

trouble the Church of God, more then abundance of thoſe that you reproach. I excuſe not the leaſt; but none of them are like you: As death is worſe then ſickneſs, as being that which all ſickneſs tends to, and the worſt that it can do; ſo Ungodlineſs is worſe then ſects and particular Errours or Hereſies, it being the worſt that any errour can do, to make a man ungodly. There are no ſuch Separatiſts in the world as you. It is not only from a *particular Church* or *Ordinance* that you ſeparate, but as I ſaid even now, you ſeparate from God that made you, from Chriſt that bought you, from the Spirit that ſhould ſanctifie you, from the Word of God that muſt Rule you or Condemn you, from the body of Chriſt, and the holy Communion of his people. The Church would have you joyn with them in holy worſhip; and your godly neighbours would

would have you joyn with them in prayer and holy lives, and you will not, but ſeparate from them all. They cannot have your help againſt the ſins of the time and place you live in: They cannot have your company in the way to heaven; but when they go one way, you go another way. You are the great troublers of the world, and break the Peace of Church and State, and of all that you have to do with. You trouble *Magiſtrates* and make work for *Lawyers*; you trouble *Miniſters*, and fruſtrate their labours, and make their lives grievous to them, when it is much in your hands to make them joyous. You trouble all the godly that are about you; and you will find at laſt that you have moſt of all troubled your own ſouls. For ſhame therefore before you ſpeak any more againſt Sects and Separatiſts, or any other troublers.

troublers of the Church, give over the ungodly ſeparation which you continue in, and come in to the Unity of the Church your ſelves, and live in that Communion of Saints which you ſay you do believe, and do not go on to trouble the Church abundance more then thoſe that you ſpeak againſt.

4. Conſider alſo, *Whether* you have not as much reaſon to live a diligent holy life, and ſeek God and your ſalvation with all your might, as any of your *neighbours* have? and therefore whether your own Neceſſity doth not call aloud to you, to *Unite* with them and to do as they do? Your Godly neighbours are meditating on the Word of God, when you are thinking of the world or on vanity: *they* are diſcourſing of the life to come, when you are talking of your worldly buſineſs, or pouring out a com-

company of idle words. Ask your consciences now whether you have not as much need to study the Scripture and prepare for the life to come as they. Your godly neighbours are at prayer, when you are sinning and drowned in the inordinate cares of the world, and have no heart to their employment. Let conscience speak whether you have not as much need to pray as they. They abhor sin and are afraid of it, when you boldly venture on it. Let conscience tell you, Whether you have not as much cause to be afraid of sin as they? Yea and an hundred times more; for you are under the guilt and power of it. O wonderful madness of the ungodly world! that the example of the godly should not bring them to some consideration. A man that is converted and reconciled to God, and hath a pardon of all his sins, and is

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in a ſtate of ſalvation, and walketh humbly and uprightly with God; doth yet think all too little that he can do, but faſteth, and prayeth, and watcheth againſt temptations, and humbleth his fleſh, and followeth after God continually, and lamenteth after all that he is ſo bad, & can do no more. And his neighbor that liveth by him, is an ignorant ſtupid ſinner, unconverted, and under the guilt of his ſin, and under the curſe and wrath of God, having no aſſurance of ſalvation; nay it is certain that he would be caſt into Hell the next hour if he die in that condition; and yet this man feels not any ſuch need of prayer, and holy meditation, and conference, and ſo religious and ſtrict a life. He that hath loſt almoſt all the time of his life, and is not only quite behind-hand in knowledge and abilities, but is an unſanctified miſerable wretch, not ſure

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to be out of Hell an hour, this man perceiveth no ſuch neceſſity of an holy life, nor why he ſhould make ſo much ado. As if a *rich* man ſhould be put to daily labour, and a man that hath *nothing* ſhould think it needleſs: Or as if a man that hath the tooth-ake or a ſlight diſeaſe, ſhould ſend to the Phyſitian, and he that hath the Plague ſhould ſit ſtill and ſay, What needs this trouble? Sirs, I beſeech you look upon the holieſt and moſt heavenly neighbours you have, and bethink you whether you have not much more need to be diligent then they? Have not you immortal ſouls to ſave or loſe as well as they? Are not you in danger of damnation as much and an hundred times more then they? Should not God be your maſter as well as theirs? and his Law your Rule as well as theirs? and Heaven be as dear to you as to them? Bethink your

ſelves

ſelves when you hear them praying, or reading, or repeating Sermons, and Sanctifying the Lords day, and fearing to offend, [*Have not I as much need to do all this as any of them?*] If then you have as much cauſe and need to live a godly life as others, joyn with them in it, and let all the Town agree together, and none withdraw but he that can ſay, *I have no need of it.*

5. And I pray you conſider alſo, *how eaſie it would make the way to heaven, if we would but all Unite and Agree to go together in it.* This is it that diſcourageth the weak, and makes it ſo hard a matter to be ſaved, becauſe there are ſo *few* that are godly: but if one or two poor people be reſolved to ſeek firſt the Kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs, and to pleaſe God and ſave their ſouls, the reſt do either look on and refuſe to joyn with them,

them, or elſe ſpeak againſt them, and make them their ordinary ſcorn. And thus he that will be ſaved, muſt not only go to heaven without the company of the moſt of his neighbours, but muſt go through their oppoſition, and reproaches, and diſcouragements: And (the Lord be merciful to the miſerable world) moſt places that one ſhall come into, are more agreed againſt holineſs and ſalvation then for it; and had rather that all the Pariſh would agree together againſt a godly life (which is indeed againſt Chriſt, and heaven, and their own ſouls) then for it: And ſome places are ſo miſerable, that you may hear them thank God that they have not one Puritan in their Pariſh, or but few at moſt; meaning by Puritans, men that ſeek heaven above earth, and had rather leave their ſins then be damned. And this diſhearteneth many

many that have ſome mind to godlineſs, to ſee almoſt all the Town and Pariſh againſt it.

But now if you had all but ſo much wit and grace, as to meet together and make an Agreement, that you will All be a holy people to the Lord, and you will All joyn together in a godly life, and you will All be the ſworn profeſſed enemies of the way to Hell, and joyn together againſt your Ignorance, and Pride, and Covetouſneſs, and Drunkenneſs, and Swearing, and Railing, and all Profaneneſs and Iniquity; and if you would All agree together, to ſet up prayer, and reading, and holy exerciſes in every houſe in Town and Pariſh, and that you will all redeem the time for your ſouls, eſpecially that you will wholly ſpend the Lords day in the neceſſary delightful work of God; then what abundance of your difficulties would be re-

removed? and how easie and pleasant would the way to heaven be! Then there would be none to discourage poor ignorant souls, by deriding at a godly life; nor none to entice them to wicked courses, nor none to tempt them by their ill examples; and the *number* of the godly would encourage men, as the fewness of them now discourageth. This troubleth men in their passage to Heaven, when we are ill-yoaked together, and one draws backward as the other draws forward: and if the husband be for God, the wife is for the world; or if the wife be for Heaven, the husband will needs go the way to Hell: and if one neighbour be godly, the two, if not ten or twenty next him will be ungodly: And as the *Israelites* spies, they raise up false reports of the Land, of the state of godliness, and of the persons themselves, to discourage others: whereas

whereas if you would all agree together, you might march on comfortably without all this ado.

O how ſweet and pleaſant a life is it to ſee brethren dwell together in ſuch an holy Unity as this? *Pſal.* 133. 1. Happy are they that dwell in ſuch Towns and Pariſhes as theſe! if there be any ſuch in the world: Where neighbours go all hand in hand together towards heaven; and take ſweet counſel together; and go to the houſe of God in company; and when others meet in Ale-houſes, and about fooleries and profaneneſs, they will meet together to talk of their meeting in the preſence of God, and the joy and praiſes of the Living God, and the Communion with Chriſt, and with Angels, and with one another, which we ſhall then poſſeſs: when they will pray together, and comfort one another with ſuch words, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 18.

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And when others are talking idly or of the world, they will be admoniſhing and exhorting one another, and ſpeaking words that are edifying to the hearers, *Col.* 3. 16. *Epheſ.* 4. 29. and opening their caſes and experiences to each other, and faithfully watching over one another, agreeing to tell one another plainly and lovingly of their ſins, and to take it thankfully of thoſe that do ſo, and endeavour preſently to amend! What a ſweet and bleſſed life were this, if all our Towns and Pariſhes would agree in it! Who would not rather live with bread and water in ſuch a Town as this, then be a Lord or Prince among the ungodly! Well Sirs, it is much in your hands now to make your own and your neighbours lives thus ſweet and comfortable, and to make the way to heaven thus eaſie: Why then will you not Agree and do it?

6. More-

6. Moreover such an Holy Unity and Concord would be the highest honour to your Towns and Countries, that in this world they can possibly receive. It is the highest glory of the Kingdoms of the world, to *become the Kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ*, Rev. 11.15. You think it a great honour for your Towns to be rich and have fair buildings, and to have worldly priviledges: but, alas, these are bawbles in comparison of the other! O if it were but the Happiness of this Town and Parish to be brought to such an Holy Agreement as I mentioned, that you would *all* joyn together in a godly life, and *every Family Agree* to worship God with holy reverence, and all set together against profaneness and all known sin, what an honour would it be to you of this place? How would your fame go through all the Land! All

Countries would ring of *Kederminſter*, what a victory Chriſt had gotten there, and what an overthrow the Devil and ſin had there received! and what a bleſſed place and people it is, where they are All agreed to be Holy and to be ſaved, and are all like the antient Primitive Believers, that were of *one heart and one ſoul*, *Acts* 4. 32. O how the world would ring of ſuch a Town where there is not one family that is ungodly, that ſerveth the Devil by worldlineſs, ſwearing, drunkenneſs, or any ungodly courſe: but all are United in Chriſt and Holineſs, and are like to live together in Heaven! Truly neighbours, this would be a greater honour to you, and to the Town, then if you were every man a Lord or Prince! In the eyes of God and all wiſe men, it would be the greateſt honour in the world. And O what an excellent example would

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it be to all the Towns and Parishes in the Land! When they see your holy Unity and Peace, or hear of a place that is so happily agreed, it may shame them out of their ungodliness, and kindle in them a strong desire to be like you, and agree together as you have done. O that you would but give them such an example, and try the issue!

7. And I desire every one singly to consider, that it is the unspeakable mercy of God, that he calleth you to this holy Union with Christ, and Communion of Saints; and that he doth not thrust you away, and forbid you coming near, but will give you leave to be of the holy Society, fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the household of God. God hath made his promise and offer so large, that you may have part in it as well as others, if you will not wilfully shut out your

ſelves. The feaſt is prepared ; all things are ready, and you are every man and woman invited ! Chriſt hath opened to you a door of admittance and acceſs to God. And will you now refuſe and undo your ſelves. The ſanctified are Gods Jewels , *Mal.* 3. 17. his treaſure and peculiar people : the beloved of his ſoul, and his delight : and the only people in the world that ſhall be ſaved. This is true ; for God hath ſpoken it : And you may be of this bleſſed number if you will. God hath not ſeparated you from them, or ſhut you out by forbidding you to come among them. O do not you ſeparate and ſhut out your ſelves. You ſee your godly neighbours in poſſeſſion of this priviledge : And may not you have it if you will ? May not you ſtudy the Word of God , and call upon him in prayer , and ſet your ſelves for heaven as well as they ? Where doth

doth the Scripture command them to it, any more then you? or forbid you any more then them? The door is open; you may come in if you will. You have the same means, and call, and offer, and time, and leave to lead an holy life as they. And will you make so much of the difference your selves, as to be the only refusers? God hath done so much for you by the death of Christ, and so ordered the matter in the promises and offers of the Gospel, that none of you shall be able to say at last, [*I would fain have been one of the blessed Society, and fain have lived in the Union and Communion of Saints, but I could not; God would not give me leave; and Christ and his Church would not receive me and entertain me.*] Not a man or woman of you shall have this excuse. And therefore come in and joyn with the Saints; & thank God that you may.

8. And consider also, that if you will not Agree with us in matter of Holiness, we can never well make up the rest of our differences: Our smaller Controversies will never be well agreed, if you will not agree in the main. But if this were Agreed, we should in season certainly heal the rest. It would make a mans heart ake, to hear wretched sinners talk of our differences about Bishops, and Ceremonies, and Common-prayer, and Holy-daies, and Infant-Baptism, and the like, that are dead in their sins, and are yet disagreed from us in the very bent of heart and life. Alas Sirs, you have other matters then these first to talk of, and trouble your selves with. A man that is ready to die of a Consumption, should not be taking care to cure the warts or freckles in his face. We have greater matters wherein we differ from you, then kneel-

kneeling at the Sacrament, or observation of daies, or other Ceremonies, or doubtful opinions in matters of doctrine. Let us first be Agreed all to serve One Master, and seek One End, and be Ruled by One Law, and hate known sin, and live a holy life, and then we shall be ready to treat with you about a further Agreement. But to talk of small matters, when we differ in the greatest matters in the world, as much as your souls are worth, and in matters which Heaven or Hell lyeth on; this is but childish trifling, and whatever we may do for the Peace of the Church with such, yet to your selves that will be small advantage.

Nay I must tell you, that it is usually but the cunning of the Devil and the hypocrisie of your own hearts, that makes you turn your talk to these controversies, when the great breach is unhealed be-

tween Christ and you. Its commonly made a shift to delude and quiet a debauched conscience. Our poor people will not by any perswasion be drawn to an holy heavenly life, but live in worldlinesse, and fleshlinesse, in swearing and drunkennesse, and lying and deceit, and filthinesse and profanenesse, and hate the Minister or Christian that doth reprove them; and then forsooth they talk of Common-prayer Book, and Holy-dayes, and Bishops, and kneeling at the Sacrament, to make others, and perhaps their deluded hearts believe, that this is the controversie and difference. And so a wretched drunkard or worldling perswades himself that he is a Religious man; as if the difference between him and the godly were but about these Ceremonies or Church-Orders: When alas we differ in greater matters, as light and darkness; life

and

and death, yea next to the difference between Heaven and Hell.

And I muſt tell you, that you do but wrong the party or cauſe that you pretend to, when you will needs engage your ſelves among them. What hath done more to the diſhonour of the Biſhops, and Common-prayer Book, and other late Orders and Ceremonies of the Church, then to ſee and hear the rabble of drunkards, ſwearers, ſcorners at holineſs, and ſuch like, to plead for them, and be violent defenders of them? If you would deviſe how to ſhame theſe things, and bring them down, you can ſcarce contrive a more effectual way, then to ſet all the ungodly ſcandalous wretches to cry them up, and become their Patrons: For it will make abundance of ſoberer people begin to queſtion whether it be likely to be good, that hath ſuch Defenders on one ſide, and

Adversaries on the other side.

And therefore Sirs, let us begin our closure and agreement in the main, if you *would* be ever the better for it, and have Unity indeed. And if you say, [*What the nearer shall we be for Agreement in the other things? Do not the Godly still differ about Church-Government, and Orders, and Ceremonies?*] I answer, 1. If we never should be Agreed in these on earth, we might bear it the more quietly, because our very hearts and souls are United in the main, even in matters abundance greater; and in all that salvation is laid upon; and therefore we have this comfort in the midst of our differences, that we shall all shortly come to Heaven, and that perfection and blessed face of God will Unite and perfectly agree us in all things.

2. In the mean time, we could hold a holy Communion with them

in

in the ſubſtance of Gods Worſhip; and we have a daily Communion with them in the Spirit, and and an endeared Love to one another.

3. And the Holineſs of their natures will encline them to manage our remaining differences with meekneſs, humility, ſelf-denyal, moderation, and with great reſpect to the ſafety of the whole Church, and the honour of God and of the Goſpel.

4. And yet I muſt add, that with ſuch there is a far greater advantage to heal the ſmalleſt difference that remains, then with any other. When we have one God to awe us, and one Heaven to draw us, and one Chriſt for our Head, and one Spirit and new nature to principle us and diſpoſe us, and one Law to Rule us, and have all one ultimate End and Intereſt, here is a great advantage for healing of any particular

ticular differences that may arise. If the liver, or spleen, or stomack, or brain, or lungs be unsound, the sores that are without will hardly be cured; yea if there were none, these inward diseases may breed them: but when all is well within, the strength of nature without a medicine will do much to cure such small distempers that arise without. The life of Faith, the love of God, the love of Brethren, and the Churches peace and welfare, with the humility and self-denyal that is in every Christian, will do a great deal to the healing of divisions among the Godly. They will be content to meet together in Love, and pray it out, and refer the matter to the holy Scripture, and they have all *some special* illumination of the Spirit.

But perhaps you will say, [*Why are they not then more fully agreed?*] I answer, 1. Because there are such

such a multitude of ungodly persons among them, that hinder them from opportunities and advantages for agreement. And many of these ungodly ones are hypocrites, that take on them to be godly, and so are traytors in our bosoms, and hinder peace the more by seeming to be godly when they are not.
2. Because of the remnant of sin that is yet in the sanctified, and because they are not yet perfect, and in Heaven. If they had no sin, they would have no divisions: And as their sin is healed as to the dominion of it, but not perfectly till they come to heaven; so their divisions are healed in the main, but not perfectly till they are perfectly United to God in Glory.

9. Consider also I beseech you, what a joy it would be to Christ, and to the Angels of heaven, and to all good men, if you would but all

all make such an Agreement, and heartily joyn together in Holiness! The whole 15. Chapter of *Luke* is by divers Parables to tell you this, what Joy there is in heaven it self for the conversion of one sinner: O what would there be then, if Towns and Countries would agree in Holiness! And I am certain it should be a Joy to the Princes and Rulers of the earth; for such a Unity only will hold, and be a blessing to their Dominions. *Plutarch* makes it *Agesilaus* his reason why the *Spartans* had no Walls, because the people being all of one minde, had no need of Walls. And *Pliny* tells us of a stone that will swim if it be whole, and sink if it be broken. And so will Common-wealths that are broken from Christ, and void of the cement of the Spirit that should Unite them.

And to the Ministers of the Gospel, and all good Christians, inch

ſuch an Unity as this would be an unſpeakable joy. Somewhat I know of other mens hearts by mine own. Could I but prevail with this Nation, yea with this one Town and Pariſh, to meet all together and heartily Conſent, Agree and Reſolve to joyn all together in an heavenly life, I ſhould more rejoyce in it, then if I had the houſe full of gold and ſilver, yea (as to mine own intereſt) then if I were Lord of all the world. O what a joyful day were this, if I could this day bring you to this Holy Unity and Agreement? How comfortably ſhould I ſpend the few remaining dayes of my pilgrimage among you, if you would but all be brought to this? Whereas I may now ſay as *David*, *Pſalm* 120. 5. for all the godly that are among you, [*Wo is me that I ſojourn in* Meſech, *that I dwell in the Tents of* Kedar! *My ſoul hath too long dwelt*

dwelt with him that hateth (this holy) *peace*; *I am for peace, but when I speak* (and perswade men to it) *they are for War*, and continuance in the dividing course of ungodliness. Alas it grieveth us to see such divisions in all the Churches and Nations of the Christian world: and O that we did know how to heal them! But when we cannot heal the most ungodly separations and divisions of one Town and Parish, it discourageth us from hoping for any great matters of such large extent. Some attempts I have made, and more I would fain make, to further a Union and Peace among the Churches through the Land: But when I cannot procure the Unity of this one Town and Parish, what hope can I have to look any further? Alas what a shame is this to you, and what a grief to us, that we cannot bring one Parish, one Village that ever

ever I knew of, in all *England*, to be all of a mind in those great, those weighty, needful things, where it is worse then a madness for men to be unresolved or disagreed? As *Melanthus* made a jest of a great man that went about to reconcile all *Greece*, and bring all the Princes and States to Peace, when he could not bring his wife and her servant-maid to agreement in his own house. So with what hopes can we attempt any publick peace, when we cannot bring one Parish, one Village, yea but very few Families, to agree in that which they must agree in, or else the refusers will be certainly condemned! I beseech you Sirs make glad the hearts of your Teachers, and of all good men, by your Agreement. You owe us this Comfort: and you owe it to Christ, and the Angels of heaven: deny us not our due, but without any more delay

Agree

Agree together to live as Saints. What a Joy it would be to your Paſtors, you are not eaſily able to believe. When *Gregory Thaumaturgus* came firſt to be Biſhop of *Neocæſarea*, he found but ſeventeen Chriſtians in the City; And when he lay on his death-bed, he deſired them to make enquiry how many Infidels were unconverted; and they found but juſt ſeventeen Infidels left, and all the reſt were converted to Chriſtianity: And though he rejoyced that he left but juſt as many unconverted Infidels as he found converted Chriſtians, yet he grieved withall, that he ſhould leave thoſe ſeventeen in the power of the Devil. When I came to you, I found you all Profeſſed Chriſtians; But Oh that I could ſay that I ſhall leave but ſeventeen unconverted when I am called from you, for all that! O that there were no more that are Infidels or Impious

Impious under the name of Christians! But I and you are unworthy of so great a mercy.

10. And I pray you consider this in time, that all of you that now refuse this Agreement in Holiness, will wish ere long that you had heartily embraced it, and joyned with the godly, and done as they. And why will you not be of the mind that you will be shortly of? And why will you be of that way and company, that you will wish at last you had not been of? The Prodigal in *Luke* 15. did think it a slavery to be kept up so strictly by his Fathers eye; he must have his portion in his own possession, and abroad he must be gone: but when smart had taught him another lesson, and misery had brought him to himself, then he is glad to be an hired servant, and casteth himself at his Fathers feet in the confession of his unworthi-

ness

nesse to be called a son. God grant that this may prove your case. But let me tell it you for a certain truth, there is not one of you that now is loth to become so Holy, and joyn your selves in the wayes of God, but the time is at hand when either Grace or Hell shall make you wish and wish again, that you might have but the poorest lowest place in the Society which you so despised. Mark what I say to you, Sirs, in the name of God. If the Lord of Heaven do not shortly make the dullest heart, the greatest derider of godlinesse among you, that heareth these words, to wish and wish an hundred times, that he had lived as holy and heavenly a life as the strictest of those that he formerly derided, then call me a false Prophet for ever, and spare not. When you feel the misery of unholy souls, and see the happinesse of the Saints above you, then O

that

that you had been but such as they, and lived as they, whatever it cost you! And as *Balaam* you will shortly say, *O that I might die the death of the righteous, and that my last end may be as his!* *Numb.*23.10. There is never a one of you all but would fain be among the Saints at Judgement, and receive their Sentence and reward; and therefore its best for you joyn with them now; or it will be too late to wish it then.

11. If all this will not serve the turn, but you will needs stand off, and separate your selves from the servants of Christ, be it known to you, you shall ere long have separation enough, and be further from them then your hearts can wish. As you would not be United to them, and joyn with them in Holiness, so you shall not be partakers with them of their Happiness. One Heaven will not hold you

you both; and there is but One to hold you: and therefore an everlasting separation shall be made: Between them and you will a great gulf be set, so that they that would pass from you to them shall never be able, *Luke* 16. 26. When they stand on the right hand, you shall be set upon the left: and when they hear [*Come ye blessed*] you shall hear [*Go ye cursed*] and when they *go away into life eternal*, you shall *go away into everlasting punishment*, Mat. 25. 31, 32, 41, 46. Then you shall see that [*the man is blessed that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in his Law doth he meditate day and night* —— *The ungodly are not so; but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away: therefore the ungodly shall not stand in*

in the Judgement, nor sinners in the Congregation of the righteous: For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the Way of the ungodly shall perish, Psalm 1.] Then you will say to them that now you differ from [*Give us of your oyl, for our Lamps are gone out.*] Oh that we had part in your holiness and your hopes! but they will answer you [*Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you.*] We have little enough for our selves, you should have done as we did: but then it will be too late, *Mat.* 25. 8, 9, 10. It will then make the proudest heart to shake, to hear, *Depart from me, all ye that are workers of iniquity, I never knew you, Matth.* 7. 23. You departed from me, and would not live in the Communion of Saints; and now Christ himself of whom you boasted, and in whom you trusted, will not know you, but cause you to depart

depart much further then you desired, both from his Saints and him. These are the true revelations of God, which may be laught at and slighted now, but will certainly be made good on all that are not now United to Christ and his Church.

12. And let me tell you, to consummate your misery, when that day of everlasting separation comes, those servants of Christ whom you refused to joyn with in an holy life, will be so many witnesses against you to your condemnation: As Christ tells you, *Mat.* 25. he will say [*In as much as you did it not to one of these, you did it not to me*] So in as much as you refused the Communion of Saints, and perhaps derided them, you refused Communion with Christ himself and derided him. Then they must testifie against you, [*We were willing to have had his*

his company in the way of holiness, but he refused it.] And when you see them set so far above you, then your own consciences will say, [*We might have been of this blessed Society, and would not: we might have done as they, and now sped as they; we were often entreated to it by our Teachers; and full glad would the godly have been of our company in an holy life; but we obstinately refused all! Wretches that we are, we refused all! We thought it needless; our hearts were against it; we preferred our pleasures, and profits, and credit, and the customs of the world before it; and now how justly do we perish in our wilfulness, and must lie in yonder burning flames, and be separated as far as Hell is from Heaven, from those that we willfully separated from on earth.*]

Beloved hearers, I were not a Believer, if I did not foresee this dreadful day: and I were no a

man, if I did not desire that you might escape this misery; and therefore I could do no less then warn you, as you love your selves, and would not be separated from them for ever, that you would presently be United to the Godly, and live in the true Communion of the Saints, and withdraw your selves from the wayes of the ungodly, lest you be found among them, and perish with them. I have done my part in telling you the truth, and now must leave the success to God.

Use

Use ult.

BUT I must conclude with a word of advice to the Godly: I have made a very large ambitious motion, for the conversion of all at once: But alas, it is far from my expectation that it should prevail. I am not so unacquainted with the power of sin, and the subtilty of the Devil, and the wilfulness of blind unsanctified men, and the ordinary course of Providence in this work, as to cherish any hopes that All the Town and Parish should Consent. If many or any more do, I shall be glad. But *plurima quæras, ut pauca feras*: An high motion when reasonable, may be serviceable to lower hopes. By what I have here said, you may see how little hope there is that ever the Church

ſhould have any ſuch Peace on earth as we deſire. If unholineſs be the hinderance, and the greateſt part of the world are ſo unholy, and ſo our Unity is like to riſe no higher then our Piety, you may ſee then how much Unity to look for.

But for your own parts, be ſure among your ſelves to maintain the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace. Love the Brother-hood, even Saints as Saints. And becauſe you are not the ſearchers of the heart, proceed according to the Word of God. Let all that Profeſs themſelves a ſanctified people, and live ſo as that you cannot certainly diſprove their profeſſion, be uſed as Saints by you, and leave the infallible judgement to God. It is only real Saints that have the internal ſpecial Unity of the Spirit, and ſaving Communion; but its Profeſſors of Faith and Holineſs that

muſt

muſt have external Communion with us in Ordinances, as they have a viſible Union of Profeſſion with the Church. But if they profeſs not Holineſs, they ought not to have any Chriſtian Communion at all.

O Chriſtians, keep cloſe to Chriſt the Center of your Unity, and the Scripture, which is the Rule of it, and cheriſh the Spirit which is the vital cauſe; walk evenly and uprightly in a dark generation, and give no offence to thoſe without, nor to the Church of God. Know them that are over you in the Lord, and be at Peace among your ſelves, and the God of Peace ſhall be with you, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 12. *Phil*, 4. 8. 9.

Object. *BUt may not a Profession of the same Faith procure a sufficient Unity among us, though all be not Saints, and savingly regenerate? Let us first be of one Religion, and then we may come to be sincere in the Practice of that Religion by Degrees.*

Answ. 1. For the Churches sake, we are thankful to God, when we see a common concord in Profession, though most are false in and to the Religion which they profess. Many wayes God doth good to his Church by unsound Professors.

1. Their Professing the same Faith doth somewhat tye their hands from persecuting it. And of the two, we can better bear Hypocrites then Persecutors.

2. And it somewhat tyeth their tongues from reproaching the Faith,

Faith, and arguing againſt it, and ſeducing others from it. And of the two, it would be more hurtful to the Church to have theſe men open enemies to the truth, and bend their wits and tongues againſt it, and to have the multitude aſſaulting their neighbours with invectives and cavils againſt Religion, then to have them falſly pretend to be Religious.

3. And it is a great mercy to the Church, hereby to have the benefit of theſe mens common parts and intereſts. When they profeſs the ſame Religion with us, though unſoundly, yet it engageth them to ſtand for the Religion which they profeſs; and their illumination and conviction may lead them to do much ſervice for the truth. By this means many hands are at work to build up the Church of Chriſt. And by this means the lives of many faithful Chriſtians are preſerved

and their eſtates much ſpared. Many have skill in building, that are not true heirs of the houſe which they build. Many have excellent gifts for preaching and expounding Scripture, by which the Church may be edified, and the Truth defended againſt the adverſaries, when yet the ſame men may themſelves be deſtitute of the Power of this truth. The Church hath great cauſe to be thankful to God for the gifts of many an unſanctified man: Had the Church been denyed the Miniſtry and Gifts of all men except Saints, it would have been confined to a narrower room, and many a ſoul might have been unconverted, that have been called by the Miniſtry of unſanctified men. By ſome ſuch did God work Miracles themſelves for the confirmation of the Chriſtian Faith. And in times of war, if the Church had none but Saints to fight

fight for them, it could not ſtand without a continued Miracle. And if we had not the daily help of others in civil and ſecular affairs, we ſhould find by the miſs of it, what a mercy we undervalued. Were every unregenerate man an open enemy to the Church, we ſhould live as Patridges and ſuch other birds, that muſt hide themſelves from every Paſſenger.

4. Moreover, this Profeſſion of Hypocrites doth much reſtrain them from many a ſin, by which God would be much diſhonoured, and the Church more wronged, and the godly more grieved, and the open enemies more encouraged.

5. And alſo it is ſome honour to the Goſpel in the eyes of men, to have a multitude of Profeſſors. Should Chriſts viſible Church be as narrow as the myſtical, and ſhould none be Profeſſors of the Faith,

but thoſe few that are ſanctified Believers, the paucity of Chriſtians, and narrowneſs of the Church, would be a diſhonour to Chriſt in the eyes of the world, and would hinder the Converſion of many a ſoul.

All this I have ſaid, that you may ſee that we do not deſpiſe a Unity in Profeſſion: and that we are not of thoſe that would have all hypocrites and common profeſſors ſhut out: Yea that we take our ſelves bound to be very thankful to God for the mercy, which he vouchſafeth us by the gifts, and favour, and help, and intereſt of many ſuch Profeſſors. And ſuch a Unity of Profeſſion we ſhall endeavour to our power heartily to promote, as knowing that the Church as viſible conſiſteth of ſuch profeſſours.

2. But yet for all this, I muſt come cloſer to your objection, and tell

tell you, that this *Unity of meer Profession* is *comparatively* so poor a kind of Unity, that this will not, this must not satisfie us and serve the turn, which I desire you to observe in these discoveries.

1. This Unity in meer Profession is *properly no Christian Unity*, because you are not *properly Christians*. If this be all, it is but in the bark and shell that we are agreed: It is but a *seeming* agreement, from the *teeth* outward: but not an *hearty* agreement to be *Christians*. What! shall we all agree to *say we are Christians?* when with most it *is not so*: For all this Agreement, *you* will still have *one* Father, and *we another*. You will not be United with us in Christ the Head: you will not have the same Holy Spirit, who is the Life of the New creature: You will be contrary to us in Nature or Disposition. You will not have the same Intention and Ultimate

Ultimate End with us, but you will aim at one thing, and we at another: You will not go the same way, nor walk by the same Rule and Law as we: It will be but a tying together the Living and the Dead. *Bellarmine* himself confesseth that the *ungodly* are but *dead members*. It is not *life* that Uniteth a dead member to the living. You will be still either openly or secretly betraying the Body to which you profess your selves United, and taking part with its deadly enemies, the flesh, the world and the Devil! Your very Hearts and ours will still be contrary: You will love the sin that we hate and set our selves against; and you will dis-relish that Holy Heavenly life, which must be our business and delight. Your Affections will go one way, and ours another. You will Live by sense, when we must live by faith; and you will be laying up a treasure

on

on earth, when we are layiug up a treaſure in heaven : You will be asking counſel of fleſh and blood, when we muſt adviſe with God and his holy Word. You will look firſt to your bodies, when we muſt look firſt and principally to our ſouls. It will be your buſineſs to feed thoſe ſins, which it is our daily work to kill. You will make and apprehend it to be your Intereſt to go contrary to us : And what Agreement can there be, where there are contrary Intereſts? Under all your outward Profeſſion, you will ſtill retain a ſecret enmity and hatred to the life of holineſs: and will not have that hearty Love to the Saints, as beſeems all thoſe that are members of Chriſt, and of the holy Catholick Church. So that when you have Communion with the Saints, it will be but an external and ſuperficial communion in ſome common things ; but you will

will have no Communion with them in the same Head, and Spirit, and Promise, and Holy Nature, and saving Benefits of the Gospel. And shall this be called *Unity*, that leaveth you at so sad a distance as this? This is but such a Union as a wooden leg hath to the body; or as the vessels of honour and dishonour have by being in the same house together. In their highest Professions, the Lord himself saith of unsanctified Professors, that they *are none of Christs*, *Rom.* 8. 9. and that *they cannot be his Disciples*, *Luke* 14. 33. that they *are not Israel, though of Israel*, *nor are they children of God, nor the seed of promise*, *Rom.* 9. 6, 7, 8. and when they plead their highest Priviledges, at last, Christ will tell them that he *knoweth them not*, *Mat.* 7. 23. & 25. 12. *Psalm* 1. 5, 6. And if in mercy to the Church God cause the Lyon and the Lambs to lie down

down together, yet will he not therefore mistake the Lyon for a Lamb. So that you see what a poor kind of Unity, and next to none it is that meer profession maketh. And therefore this will not serve our turn.

2. Moreover, if we have no other Unity, we are *unlike to live in Peace together.* Though it be our duty to endeavour to have peace with all men, yet we can have but little hope of it. As long as there is so much difference and contrariety as I have mentioned; and as long as there is a secret enmity at the heart, it will be working into dissention, if God for the sake of his Church restrain it not. The godly will be crossing your carnal Interest, and hindering you in the sinful wayes of your commodity, pleasure or vain-glory! They will be calling you to self-denyal, which you cannot endure: and putting

you upon duties of Holineſs, Righteouſneſs and Mercy, which your ſinful fleſh will utterly refuſe. If you are ſcandalous, you will be called to Confeſſion, Repentance, and Reformation, or by Church-cenſures be cut off from them to your ſhame: And the Magiſtrate alſo muſt trouble you by the penalties of the Law. The very examples of a ſtrict and holy living, which are given you by the godly, will diſpleaſe you, becauſe they are ſo unlike to your lives, and therefore witneſs againſt your negligence and ungodlineſs. So that it is not poſſible that we ſhould avoid offending you; for our very obedience to God will offend you, and our ſtudying and following the Holy Scripture will offend you, and our diligent labour to ſave our ſouls will offend you; and our hateing and avoiding the Poyſon of ſin will offend you. And how then

ſhonld

ſhould we live in Peace with ſuch? If you yoak a ſwine and a ſheep together, one will be drawing to the waſh-tub, when the other would be at graſs: and one will be drawing to lie down in the mire, when the other would lie clean: one will be rooting in the earth, and eating dung, which the others nature is againſt. It is Chriſt, before me, that calleth the wicked by the name of *ſwine*, and the godly *ſheep*: And if you will come no nearer us then this, we are like to have but poor Agreement.

And as our wayes will diſpleaſe you, ſo your galled malicious hearts will manifeſt the offence, and will be girding, and maligning, if not ſlandering, deriding, or openly perſecuting, as far as you have power, thoſe that thus offend you. And what Unity is this?

3. If Reaſon perſwade you not, do but ask experience it ſelf, Whether

ther in all ages, men that Profeſs the ſame Religion with zealous godly men, have not been their perſecutors, and oft-times more cruel then Infidels themſelves? The Arrians that called themſelves Chriſtians, were as cruel to the true Believers as the Heathens. The Papiſts profeſs the ſame Chriſtianity as we, and take the whole Scripture as the Word of God: And yet none of the Heatheniſh Perſecutions do match or come near to their French Maſſacrees, and Spaniſh Inquiſition, and the cruelty that in *Ireland*, *England*, and their part of the Chriſtian world, they have exerciſed upon the ſheep of Chriſt. The many Miniſters that were ſilenced in *Germany*, and ſome impriſoned, and many Families undone, was by the Lutherans, againſt men that were Proteſtants as well as they. And they that caſt out ſo many Learned, holy Miniſters

sters in *England*, and occasioned the expulsion of so many thousand persons fearing God, were Professed Protestants as well as we. And that there may not be the appearance so much as of a difference in Ceremonies to cover their proceedings, abundance of conformable men are troubled and undone as well as others, and they gave out that [*none were worse then the conformable Puritans.*] It was a holy observation of the Lords day, and opposition to the abuse of it by Dancings, and it was hearing Sermons, and instructing mens families, and praying together, that were the things enquired after, that occasioned our troubles. And (who ever was in the right or wrong) you all know that the late miserable wars among us, was between men that professed themselves to be of the same Religion, not only as Christians, but as Protestant

teſtant, and Reformed (in the main.) To this day you ſee among our ſelves in Towns and Countries, that thoſe that do not only dwell with us, and come to the ſame Aſſemblies with us, and profeſs themſelves of the ſame Proteſtant Reformed Religion, have yet many of them a ſecret malignity againſt the godly, that will not be as looſe and negligent as they, and will not as madly caſt away their ſouls: And alſo even many greater Hypocrites, that rank themſelves with us in the ſame Church-order, and ſeem to own all Ordinances of God, and Government of the Church, yet when this Government croſſeth them in their carnal wayes, and theſe Ordinances open the nakedneſs of their miſcarriages, they prove ſtark enemies to the Government, Officers and Ordinances themſelves.

Indeed

Indeed however we may abide together (as the clean and unclean creatures in *Noahs* Ark) yet ſtill at the heart there is ſo much enmity or diſtance, and in our Ends and Intereſts there is ſo much contrariety, that if the Miniſters and other followers of Chriſt, will faithfully diſcharge the duty that is required of them, they will *certainly be perſecuted by men of the ſame Profeſſion in Religion*; eſpecially by the *Prouder and Loftyer ſort of wicked men.* Becauſe ſome will receive the ſame truth better from one then from another. I will give you my aſſertion in the words of a man that you ſhall confeſs did ſpeak impartially, and not out of any intemperance or ſingularity; who in a Proſperous Univerſity, in Peaceable times, being himſelf in favour, and of that Judgement and of ſuch Learning as was likely to continue him in favour, did yet write

write thus concerning perſecution: I mean Doctor *Jackſon*, in his Book of ſaving Faith, ſect. 2. chap. 4. pag. 185. [*The Miniſters of Chriſt may deny Chriſt, or manifeſt their aſhamedneſs of his Goſpel, as directly by not laying his Law as cloſely to the great* Herods *of the world, as* John Baptiſt *did (ſuppoſe the caſe be as notorious, and as well known to them) as if they had been afraid to confeſs him, for fear of being put out of the Synagogues, or ſaid with thoſe other Jews, We know that God ſpake with* Moſes, *and gave authority to Magiſtrates; but this man we know not whence he is, nor do we care for his Counſels. Yet were* John Baptiſts *kind of preaching uſed in many Kingdoms, though by ſuch as profeſs the ſame Religion with the Potentates, they ſhould offend with their boldneſs, I think it would prove matter of Martyrdom in the end. That any age ſince Chriſtian Religion*

Religion was first propagated, hath wanted store of Martyrs, is more to be attributed to the Negligence, Ignorance, and Hypocrisie, or want of courage in Christs Embassadors, or appointed Pastors, then unto the sincerity, mildness or fidelity of the flock; especially of the Bell-weathers or chief ring-leaders. Or if Satan had not abated the edge of primitive zeal and resolution by that dishonourable peace concluded between Christianity und Gentilism, after the settling of Goths *and* Vandals *in these parts of Christendom; had he not utterly benummed mankind by locking up their spiritual senses in midnight darkness, and fettering their souls in superstition, since the time he himself was let loose:* Rome *Christian had seen more Martyrs, even of such as did not much dissent from her in most opinions held within six hundred years of Christ, in one year, then* Rome

Heathen

Heathen at any time had known in ten. Even in Churches best Reformed, it would be much easier, I think, to find store of just matter of Martyrdom, then of men fit to make Martyrs. And he that hath lived any long time in these quiet mansions, and seats of Muses, secure from Mars *his broyls, or external violence, hath great cause either to magnifie the tender mercies of his gracious God, or suspect himself for an Hypocrite, if he have not suffered some degrees of Martyrdom: But unto such as have been exercised therein, it bringeth forth the quiet fruit of Righteousness.*]

Thus you see this Learned Doctor, though in favour with the Rulers of the age he lived in, did think that a man that would not be an Hypocrite, but faithfully discharge his duty, was likely to suffer Martyrdom from those of the same Profession with himself, and that

that it must be by very great mercy from God, or by hypocrisie and unfaithfulness in us, if any Minister do scape the hands of the wicked that are of his own Profession. So that you may see that meer Profession will make but a poor Agreement or Union among us: Sin will be sin still, and the flesh will rage still after its prey in unmortified Professors; and the Word of God will still disgrace them and condemn them, and consequently trouble them and exasperate them; So that if you come no nearer to us then a Profession of the Christian Protestant Religion, you will still be souldiers in the Army of the Devil, and be still flying in the faces of true Believers, whenever they do but cross you in your sins.

3. Consider also, What a poor benefit comparatively it is to your selves, to be joyned with the Saints

by a bare Profeſſion, and no more. Will it make you happy to ſee their faces, or live among them? So do the bruit beaſts, and ſo do their Perſecutors: Will it make you happy to be called by the name of Chriſtians? No more then it maketh a Picture Rational to be called by the name of a man. And what if by your parts and moral vertues, you are ſome way *helpful* to the Church? So is the wooden leg to the body, which yet is not a member, but a crutch.

4. Yea me thinks it ſhould rather double your ſorrows, that you are ſo miſerable among the happy. You live with them that have part in Chriſt, when you have none in him. You joyn with thoſe that have the Spirit of God, and an holy diſpoſition and converſation, when *you* have none: You kneel by them whoſe Spirits are importunate with God in prayer,

er, when *your* hearts are dead: You sit by them that are quickned and sanctified by the Word, which to *you* is but a dead and empty sound. You are famished among them that are feasting upon Christ, and upon the precious promises of eternal life. You are but as carkases among the living: Their company maketh not you alive; but your noysom conversation is grievous unto them, unless it be some of you that are embalmed and beflowered with some common graces, for the sakes of those that else would be more troubled with you. And is this so great a comfort to you, to be dead among the living, and to be heirs of hell in the midst of them that are heirs of heaven? Methinks (till you are sanctified) it should be a daily horrour to you, to look them in the faces, and think that they have Christ and grace, and you have

none; and to hear in the holy Assemblies the mention of their happiness, and the name of that God, that Christ, that Heaven where they must live for ever, and in which their blessedness consisteth, when you must be turned out into everlasting misery.

That you may not think I am singular in all this, I will add here some humane testimony for confirmation of it. *Zonoras, Comment. in Epist. Canon. Can.* 45. *ex* Basil. *M. Epist.* 2. *ad Amphiloch.* gives us this as one of the Canons of the Greek Church received from *Basil* [*If any one receiving the Name of Christianity, shall be a reproach to Christ (that is, saith* Zonaras, *by a wicked life) his Name or Appellation is no profit at all to him.*] And even in the Roman Canon Law, this is one Canon taken out of *Augustine*, [*Parvulus qui baptizatur, si ad annos rationales veniens, non credi-*

crediderit, nec ab illiritis abstinuerit, nihil ei prodest quod parvulus accepit. Decret. part 3. *dist.* 3. *p.* 1241.] that is [*A Baptized Infant, if when he comes to years of discretion, doth not believe, nor abstain from things unlawful, it profiteth him nothing which he received in his infancy.*] If it were needful after the Canons both of the Greek and Latine Church to give you the like words from particular Fathers, I could soon perform it.

5. You are so far from being Happy by your visible Church-state and outward Profession, and Communion with the Church, that you have the greater sin, and will have the sorer punishment, because among such examples, such means, and calls, and mercies, you yet resist the Grace of Christ, and are void of that Holiness which your tongues Profess. The poor Indians hear not that which you daily or

weekly hear; nor have the opportunities in publick and private that you have had. If they lie in ignorance and unbelief, they can say, it is becauſe they never read or heard the Scripture, nor ever had a man to tell them of the bleſſed tidings of Redemption, or open to them the way to life: But ſo cannot you ſay for your ſelves. They were the leſs excuſable, if they had ſeen but one of your dayes, or joyned but once in thoſe holy Aſſemblies which you profane. The mouth of Chriſt himſelf hath told us concerning the rejecters of his Miniſters and his Goſpel, that it ſhall be eaſier for *Sodom* in the day of Judgement then for them, *Mat.* 10. 15. You will find a hotter place in Hell, that paſs thither from thoſe ſeats, from this Aſſembly, from ſuch a neighbourhood, and ſuch a Nation, then if you had paſſed thither from among the Turks or Indians. 6. More-

6. Moreover, there is in some respects, less hope of your salvation, that have long lived unconverted in the outward Communion of the Church, then of other men. As a sick man is in a more desperate case that hath long used the best and only means, and all in vain, then he that never used any. I confess you have the advantage of being still *under* the means; and that is your hope (as long as it lasteth): but then you have the dreadful symptom of *frustrating* these means; and that is your terrour, above those that yet remain without.

7. Moreover, if you agree with us but in Profession and outward Communion, you will be thereby more capable of doing us the greater mischief. I know God doth benefit his Church by many of the unsanctified, as I said before. But many others of them are the great-

eſt plagues to it. One enemy in our own Armies, or in our Councils, may do more againſt us, then ten thouſand open enemies abroad. Falſe-hearted Biſhops, Paſtors, yea and Magiſtrates, that have the Name and not the Nature of Chriſtians, are they that have betrayed the Church, and broken it in pieces, and made the cauſe of Chriſt a ſtepping-ſtone to their worldly ends. It was a *Doeg* that betrayed *David* and *Abimelech*: It was a *Judas* that betrayed Chriſt himſelf. You are now our daily hearers, and live ſome of you civilly among us, and take your ſelves confidently for Chriſtians and Saints as well as others, and ſecretly ſcorn thoſe that would rob you of that honour, as appropriating it unto themſelves, and ſay as *Zedekiah* to *Micaiah* when he ſtruck him, 1 *King.* 22. 24. [*Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me*

to

to speeak unto thee ?] But if the times should turn, and you had but your will, at least if you were but forced or driven by Authority, we should soon find many of you to be blood-thirsty enemies, that now are so confident that you are Christians and true servants of God. A little money would hire those *Judas'es* to betray Christ, and his Cause and Church, that now are our familiars, and put their hands into the same dish with the true Disciples. While they are among us, they are not of us: and therefore when Temptations come, they will be gone from us. Its well if half this Assembly that are now hearing me, would stick to Godliness, if Godliness were but the persecuted, scorned way of the times: Yea if they would not forsake even the name it self of Christian, and forsake these Assemblies and outward worship, if the Rulers were against

it, and did but persecute it, so that it must cost them any thing dear to hold it.

8. Moreover, these hollow-hearted Christians, that agree with us but in the outside and the name, are capable of dishonouring Christ and the Gospel, much more then if they were open enemies. If a professed Heathen or Infidel live wickedly, this cannot be cast upon the Gospel or the Christian name, nor can Christ and his servants be hit in the teeth with it, or reproached by it: But when those that take on them to be Christians, and joyn with Christians in their publike worship, shall live like Heathens, or worse then some of them, want greater wrong can be done to Christ? will he not one day take such wretches by the throats, *and say*, [*If thou must have thy Pride, and Drunkenness, and Covetousness; if thou must needs*

needs ſwear and curſe and rail, or live an ungodly fleſhy life, thou ſhouldeſt have kept thee out of my Church, and not have called thy ſelf a Chriſtian, and taken an eaſier place in Hell: Muſt thou bring thy wickedneſs into my houſe, and among my ſervants, to diſhonour me? Muſt I and my ſervants be reproached with thy crimes?]

And this is one great cauſe why Chriſt hath appointed Diſcipline in his Church to admoniſh and Reform, or reject the ſcandalous: And this is the reaſon (among many others) why faithful Chriſtians, (though they would make no unjuſt diviſions and ſeparations) would yet have the Church of Chriſt kept clean, by uſe of holy Diſcipline, as he hath appointed; Becauſe it is from ſuch falſe-hearted Profeſſors (uſually) that the name of Chriſt is reproached in the world: Theſe are they for the

moſt

moſt part that make Turkes and Jewes and all other enemies ſay, that Chriſtians are as bad as others, becauſe thoſe that *are as bad as others*, do take on them to be Chriſtians. When Drunkards, and Fornicators, and Covetous perſons, and profane, do come to the Congregation, and ſay they are Chriſtians, when in heart and deed they are not, what wonder then if Infidels and Enemies of the Church reproach us and ſay, You ſee what Chriſtians are? How could a Papiſt do the Proteſtants a cunninger and ſurer miſchief, then to take on him a Proteſtant, and then commit fornication or other horrid lewdneſs, or joyn with ſome abominable Sect, to make men think that the Proteſtants are ſuch as theſe! And how can you do Chriſt a greater wrong then to carry the dung of the world into his Church; and to co-

ver

ver all the crimes of Infidels, with the name and garb of Christianity, that it may be said, All these are the crimes of Christians! And therefore it is that Christ and his faithful Ministers, though they would have as many as is possible to be saved, yet are not so forward to take in all, as others be: For Christ needeth not servants, but its *they* that need *him*; and he had rather have a few that will honour him by mortifyed holy lives then a multitude that will but cause his name and Gospel to be reproached. It is certain from Church-history, that the holy life of some one or few persons (as *Gregory Thaumaturgus*, *Macarius*, and many the like) hath drawn in multitudes and converted Countries to the faith: when the wickedness of whole Towns and Countries of Professed Christians, hath caused many to fall off, and caused the enemie to insult.

We

We will not for all this break our Rule, nor presume to search the hearts of men, any further then they appear in outward Evidence. We will still take all Professors of Christianity as Christians, that Null not their own Profession. *Basil* was advised by *Athanasius* himself to receive the *Arrians* themselves into Communion, if they did but disown their former errors, and subscribe to the *Nicene* Creed, and seek the Communion of the Churches. And he practised this, though many were offended at it. But yet we must needs say, that it is better for the Church to have a few that are Holy and answer the nature of their holy Calling, then to have multitudes that will but prove our shame, and make the Infidel world believe that Christianity is not what it is. Yea and these are they most commonly too (though they

may

may proceed to a higher profeſſion) that are carried about with every wind of doctrine, and that turn to Hereſies, and cauſe and continue the Diviſions of the Church: For they that are ſuch, *ſerve not the Lord Jeſus*, when they profeſs to ſerve him, *Rom.* 16. 17. When Hereſies do ariſe, it is ſuch chaff as this that is carried away, that the Approved Chriſtians indeed may be made manifeſt, 1 *Cor.* 11 19. Abundance of proud unſanctified perſons, do us as much good in the Church as fire in our thatch, or as mutinous ſouldiers that are but the enemies agents in the Army, to ſet all the ſouldiers together by the ears, or diſcover their Councils, or blow up their magazins. And would you have us contented with ſuch a kind of Agreement and Communion with you as this, which you and we are like to be ſo little the

better

better for, if not the worse?

9. Furthermore, it is not this meer Agreement in Profession that will satisfie Christ himself, and therefore it must not satisfie us. It is not in this that he attaineth the principal ends of his Redemption, nor seeth the travaile of his Soul. Alas, the blood of Christ is lost to you, and all the Ordinances and means are lost, and all the labour of Ministers is but lost to you as to any pardon of sin, or life, or Heaven that ever you shall have by them, if you goe no further. And would you have us be contented with such an Agreement as this?

10. Lastly, Consider that if we Agree no further then in an outward Profession of the Christian faith, alas, it will be but a *short* Agreement. We may be together here a while in the Church, as fishes good and bad in one net; but when

when it is drawn to the ſhore, a ſeparation will be made. Here you may ſit and kneel among us a while, and go away with the Name of Chriſtians: But alas, it is but a little while till this Agreement will be broken, and a dreadful everlaſting ſeparation muſt be made. Dreadful to the unſanctified, but joyful to the Saints. And what great good will it do to you or us, to be tyed together a little while, by words and ſhews, and then to be everlaſtingly ſeparated, as far as Light from darkneſs, Heaven from Hell, and the Greateſt Joys from the Greateſt ſorrows. O blame us not if we motion to you, and beg of you, a far neerer Union and Agreement then this.

I think I have now ſufficiently proved, that If we will be indeed of *One Religion*, and ever come to a right Agreement, it is *The Unity of the ſanctifying Spirit* that muſt

muſt do it. It muſt be a Union and Agreement in true Converſion and Holineſs of life, and nothing lower will ſerve the turn. If God do us any good by the *Profeſſion*, *Gifts* or *Intereſt* of Hypocrites and unſanctified profeſſors, we'l thank him for it, and take it as a mercy: But it is a higher *Deſign* that muſt be in our Hearts; and woe be to them that come no nearer the Holy Catholik Church and the Unity of the Spirit and the Communion of Saints, then by an Outward profeſſion and participation of Sacraments, and ſuch like outward Ordinances of Communion.

Queſt. BUT *ſuppoſe we ſhould be United in the Spirit, and Agree in Holineſs, do you think this would heal the Diviſions of the Church? Doe you not ſee that the moſt godly are all in pieces, as well as others?*

others? Is it not such that have been the principal causers of our late Divisions? You promised to shew us, How we might do well, for all our other differences if we were bu Agreed in Holiness; will you now shew us what Advantage that would be?

Answ. To be Agreed in Holiness, and to be Heartily one in the Essentials of Christianity, is an exceeding advantage to us in all our disagreements about lesser things. As

1. Were we but once *United in the main and Sanctified by the Uniting Spirit of Christ, our Principal differences were healed already.* We should no longer be of different minds, whether sin or holiness be best; or whether earth or heaven should be chosen for our portion; nor whether God or the flesh or world should be obeyed. You little think what abundance of differences

ces are at once reconciled in the very hour of a ſinners converſion. Before that hour, we differed in Judgement from all wiſe men, from all the Saints of God, from all the holy Prophets, Apoſtles and Martyrs, as well as from all the Godly about us; and from all men of right Reaſon, and faith and experience; Yea we differed from the Holy Ghoſt, from Chriſt, from God himſelf; yea from none ſo much as him. Wicked wretches! you differ from the Godly becauſe they Agree with God; but you differ more from God then from them. When you deſpiſe a Holy life, are his thoughts like your thoughts? when you revile his ſervants, and ſcorn his yoak and burden as too heavy, are you then of the mind of Chriſt? O no; Your darkneſs and his Light, are far more diſtant then you are able to conceive. Were you but once

Recon-

Reconciled to God, by converting ſanctifying light, you would at once be Reconciled to his ſervants; for in the matters of chief concernment to the ſoul, they are all of his mind; for he is their Inſtructer. And then what a day of healing would that be! Oh what abundance of differences are ended upon the day of true Converſion? And withal what abundance of differences would be new made? For now you Agree with the Devil and with your fleſhly deſires, and with diſtracted wicked men, and all this Agreement would then be broke: For this friendſhip with the world is enmity to God, *Jam.* 4. 4. and ſuch Diviſions as theſe Chriſt tells us that he came to ſend, *Luke* 12. 51. But you would preſently be Agreed with God, with the Holy Scriptures, with all the Apoſtles and Servants of the Lord, and with

with all men of Spiritual wisdom and experience in the world, in the great and principal matters of your lives. And it is a multitude of particulars that is contained in this Agreement that's made when a sinner is truly sanctified.

2. If once you were united in the Spirit, and Agreed in a Holy life, *you would differ in nothing that could keep you out of Heaven.* And if we have some small differences on Earth, as long as they are such as cannot hinder our salvation, they may be the more easily born. *Paul* and *Barnabas* had a little falling out: but O how sweetly are they now reconciled! *Hierom* and *Chrysostom*, *Epiphanius* and *John* of *Hierusalem*, *Theophilus* and *Chrysostom*, were at odds; *Luther* and *Zuinglius* had their disagreements; But Oh how happily are they now agreed! Our imperfection of Knowledge causeth

cauſeth us here to erre and differ in part: But if we are all united in Chriſt, and agreed in the main, how quickly ſhall we ſee that bleſſed Light that will reconcile all our controverſies! Marvail not to find ſome conteſts among the moſt learned and moſt godly, unleſs you'l marvail that Earth is not Heaven; or that in that body we ſee not the face of God, which is the all-diſcloſing reconciling light. If we were all here together in the dark, and were of many opinions about the things before us; if one did but come in among us with a candle, it might end all our differences in a moment. When we are newly out of this obſcuring fleſh, and this dark deceitful earthly world, O what an unconceiveable reconciliation will be made, by that bleſſed Light! *There's* no contending or quarrelling: For there are none of thoſe errors or paſſi-

ons

ſions that ſhould occaſion it. As Imperfect Holineſs produceth an anſwerable Imperfect Unity, ſo perfect Holineſs will prfectly Unite. And is not this then the only way to Unity, which will help us here to what is here attainable, and ſecure us of eternal perfect concord, in the world that we are paſſing to? O ſee that you be once Agreed in the things that are neceſſary to ſalvation, and then the hour is neer at hand that will end all your differences, and agree you in the reſt.

3. If once you be but Agreed in Holineſs, *you will have no difference left, that ſhall deſtroy any Grace in you, that's neceſſary to ſalvation.* The power of Divine faith, and Love and Hope, and Fear and Zeal, will ſtill be ſafe. Your diſeaſes will not deſtroy your vital faculties. And if the Head, the Heart, and principal parts be ſound,

ſound, you may the better bear a ſmall diſtemper. The diſagreements of the ungodly from God, from Scripture and the Saints, are *mortal* to them, and prove them under the power of darkneſs and of Satan, that leads them captive at his will, (2 *Tim.* 2. 26. *Eph.* 2. 23. *Acts* 26. 18.) But the differences of the ſanctified, are but as the different complexions or ſtatures of children, or at worſt but as their falling out, which will not cauſe the Father to turn them out of his family; ſo that as long as Faith, and Love, and Hope and other Graces are kept ſound, we ſhall certainly do well for all our differences. And this is the benefit of Agreeing in Holineſs.

4. Moreover, if once we were all Agreed in the Spirit, and in Holineſs of Heart and Life, *we ſhould eſcape all Hereſies, or Errors that effectually ſubvert the Eſ-*

ſentials of the Chriſtian faith. Miſtaken we might be; but Heretikes we could not be. I ſtick not upon the bare word, whether ſmaller errors may be called Hereſie; but taking Hereſie as commonly its taken, a ſanctified perſon cannot (at leaſt Habitually) be a Heretick. For ſhould a man ſo hold a point inconſiſtent with any one Eſſential point of the Chriſtian faith (at leaſt Habitually and Practically hold it,) its as impoſſible that this man ſhould be then a Chriſtian as that contradictories ſhould be true. And therefore certainly whoſoever is a true Chriſtian, is free from ſuch Hereſies. And therefore as, if you are ſure a man ſo holds a Hereſie, you have no reaſon to believe his ſhews of Holineſs; ſo where you ſee a great appearance of real Holineſs, you muſt long deliberate and have good evidence, before you judge

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that man a Heretick: For this is the certain Priviledge of the Sanctified, that they cannot be Hereticks, though they may have many errors (as *in sensu composito* all confess).

5. Morover if we were but all Agreed in true Holiness, *we should be freed from most of those scandalous sins which are the common occasion of our reproaches and divisions.* It is sin that is the great trouble of the Church, and of the world. (*John* 7. 25.) *This* breeds our quarrels This setteth all into a flame. When a Drunkard, or an unclean person, or a slanderer, or a railer, or any scandalous person, is reproved, or openly admonished, or for impenitency rejected, then the Devil and sin bestir themselves, and rage against the Church and Officers and Ordinances of God. It is sin within that animateth the malignant to be con-

tentious: And it is to defend and take part with ſin, that they fall out with God and his Word and Servants. Now Holineſs is contrary to this ſin that troubleth us. Mortification of ſin is part of Sanctification. If therefore we were Agreed in Holineſs, it were as ready a way to procure our Peace, as quenching the fire in your thatch, is the ready way to ſave your houſe. I know there are too many ſcandals given by the beſt. But it is commonly but by the weaker worſer ſort of the beſt. And it is not a common thing with them neither. And none of them make a trade of ſinning, nor have any unmortified reigning ſin. If a *Noach*, a *Lot*, a *David*, be once ſcandalous in all his life, this is not the caſe of all the godly; and it is not like the caſe of the ungodly that are either often, or impenitent in it. And therefore though it may

diſturbe

disturbe the Church: yet not so much as the frequent and impenitent scandals of the ungodly. O could we but all Agree against this make-bate, this great disturber and troubler of the world, what Peace might we enjoy?

6. And also, if once we could Agree in Holiness, *the matter and occasion of offences, separations and contentions would cease.* What caused the Donatists separation of old, but the *scandals* in the Church: and the receiving of such upon repentance into Communion or ministry? And so the Novatian schism also was occasioned. And though the Donatists and Novatians were too blame to be against the Ordination or reception of such Penitents; yet the prevention of the sin, would have been the prevention of the breach. What hath caused so many to turn separatists in *England*, but seeing so

many ungodly persons in our Churches and Communion? You that are most offended at Schisms and Private Churches, are the common occasions of it your selves. If such ungodly persons were not in our Assemblies, few godly persons would separate from them. Though I do not justifie them, yet I must needs condemn you as the cause. Were it not for you, we should be more of a mind among our selves. But when your rotten ulcers and corrupted lives have raised a stink in our Assemblies, this causeth our Division: The Separatists stop their noses and are gone, and will come here no more; and the rest of us think that for your sakes and the Peace of the Church, we should stay as long as well we can, like Patient Surgeons that will not forsake their Patient because of a rotten stinking sore, as long as there

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is any hope of cure, or of saving the body, by cutting off the rotten member. And thus while some are more patient and charitable towards you, and some are more impatient of your sin, or else afraid of Gods displeasure for having communion with you, here comes our divisions among our selves, for your sakes. And therefore if we were but Agreed in Holiness, all this were ended. There would then be no habituated Drunkard, or worldling, or railer, or swearer, or other ungodly persons in our Churches; and then who could scruple communion with them? and so what should hinder but we might all be one? and yet will you not agree in this?

7. Yea if we were united in the Spirit of Holiness, *the very Dividing unpeaceable Disposition of men would it self be healed, and so we should have Peace.* For an uncharitable,

table, dividing disposition is part of the *old man*, and of that *unholiness* which we must forsake. And charity and meekness, and a peaceable healing temper, is Holiness it self. And therefore this must needs do much to heal and reconcile us. Read but *James* 3. throughout, and it will satisfie you of this, if you will be satisfied. Those that pretend to be wiser then the rest of the godly, and to have more illumination, *if yet they have bitter envying and strife in their hearts, they Glory in vain, and lie against the truth: For this Wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual and deviliſh. He that is truly wise and endued with knowledg in the Church, must shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of Wisdom. For the wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then Peaceable, gentle, easy to be intreated; full of mercy and good fruits,*

fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrſie. But where envying and ſtrife is, there is confuſion, and every evil work, James 3. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. See here what a ſpirit ſanctification doth contain, and whether this be not the only healing way. It is *firſt* indeed *Pure:* but next it is *Peaceable, gentle and eaſy to be intreated.* They that *cauſe Diviſions and offences contrary to the Doctrine which is taught, do not ſerve the Lord Jeſus, what ever they may pretend or think. Peace and Holineſs* muſt be followed together, *Heb.* 12. 14. Yea *Peace with all men;* if it be poſſible, and in our power, *Rom.* 12. 18. ſo that by changing the unpeaceable Diſpoſition, and drying up the fountain of our ſtrifes, an Agreement in the Spirit would reconcile us.

8. Moreover, if we would all Agree in the ſpirit of Holineſs, *it*

would destroy that Carnal selfish disposition, and that end which is the dividing Interest, and take away the bone of our contentions. It is *selfishness* that causeth the great Divisions in Church and State, and sets the world together in wars and quarrels: Every unsanctified man is selfish: his *self* and selfish interest is more to him then God and his interest. And such men as these will never live with any man in peace, any longer then they may have their will and way. They will not agree with neighbours if *self* be but toucht by any. They will hate the Magistrate when ever he would punish them. They will hate the Pastors of the Church if they faithfully discharge their offices, in reproving them, and calling them to Repentance and such Confession as is necessary to their cure. If it were Father or Mother, a selfish person cannot bear it,

it, if they go againſt his *ſelfiſh* intereſt. Theres no living at peace with *ſelfiſh* men, if you do but croſs them in their credit or profit or ſenſual delights: and this we *muſt do*, unleſs we will incur the diſpleaſure of our Lord. We are caſt upon an Impoſſibility of living in Peace with wicked men. For God hath commanded us to *to rebuke them plainly, and not to ſuffer ſin upon them.* And if we diſobey God to pleaſe men, it will coſt us dearer then their favour can repay. But if we obey God and do our duty, we are as ſure to be hated and reproached with the moſt, as that the earth is under our feet. Give a wicked ſelfiſh ſinner as plain Scripture and Reaſon as can be given, and you ſhall not ſtir him from his ſelfiſh intereſt: If you puniſh him, or reprove him openly, or exerciſe Church-cenſures on him, or any way touch his carnal

ſelfiſh

selfish interest, and when you have done go about to satisfie him with Reason, you may as well almost go Reason a hungry dog from his carrion, or Reason a Wolf into the nature of a Lamb, or Reason a Mastiff to be friends with a Bear. Many a tryal I have made; and many a time I have stopt their mouthes, and satisfied them in reason, that they ought to deny themselves, and confess and forsake their sins, and yield to God (or made them confess so much at the least) But their selfish minds were no more satisfied, for all that, then if I had never spoken to them. Scripture is no Scripture, nor Reason is no Reason to them; nor God shall be no God to them, if *self* do but contradict it; and that is, when ever he contradicteth *self*. They can no more believe and Like, and Love that doctrine or duty or counsel or course of life,

life that crosseth *self*, and calls them to any great *self-denial*, then a child can love to be corrected. So that *self* being so certain a Peace-breaker and disturber of the world; and yet being the Reigning Principle in all that are unsanctified, you may easily see that this is the hindrance of our *Unity and Concord*; and that sanctification must needs be the Principal remedy. For sanctification is the destruction of *selfishness*, and teacheth men *self-denial*, and centreth all men in one Interest which is God. Among the unsanctified there are as many Ends and Interests as Men: For every one of them hath a *self* to Please: And then what Unity can there be? But the sanctified are *all* United in God, as their common Principle, End and All: and therefore must needs be reconciled.

9. Moreover, if we could but

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all Agree in the Spirit of Holineſs, *We ſhould then overcome that pride and ſelf-conceitedneſs, that breaks our peace, and raiſeth errors, and puts us into diſſentions.* What makes us all ſo hardly to Agree, and to be of ſo many minds and ways, but that every man naturally is proud and ſelf-conceited, and wiſe in his own eyes, and confident of every fancy of his own? All his own Reaſons ſeem ſtrong to him: and Gods own Reaſons do ſeem unreaſonable to him: And can we ever agree with ſuch men as theſe, that think themſelves wiſer then God and Scripture, and dare prefer the very folly of their own muddy brains, before the word and wiſdom of their Maker? Give theſe men as plain Scripture and Reaſon as you will, they have more wit (as they think) then to believe you; and what they want in Reaſon, they have in Pride and Self-conceit; and there-

therefore your wisdom is folly to them. But now when the Spirit of Holiness comes, it takes them down, and abaseth and humbleth the proud and self-conceited, and makes them ashamed of the folly and weakness of their own understandings, so that a man may speak to them now as to men of reason, and have a hearing and consideration of his words. A humble godly man is low in his own eyes; and therefore suspicious of his own understanding, in doubtfull things; and therefore is more flexible and yielding to the truth; when others are so stiffened by Pride, that they are readier to deride the wisest that shall contradict them: If therefore we could but all Agree in Holy meekness and humility, what readier way could there be in the world, to draw to an end of our differences and divisions!

10. Moreover, if we could but Agree

Agree in Holineſs, *it would free us from that uncharitableneſs that cauſeth our Diſagreement in other things; and it would poſſeſs us with a ſpecial endeared Love one to another:* And who knoweth not that Love is a uniting healing thing? Sanctification principally conſiſteth in Love to God and man, and this the unſanctifyed principally want. Its want of Love that makes men ſurmiſe the worſt of one another, and make the worſt of all that they ſay & do, and draw matter of contention from that which never gave them Cauſe. Love would put a better ſence upon mens words and deeds, or at leaſt would bear them far more eaſily. But inſtead of Love, there is a Natural Enmity in all that are unſanctified to all the ſervants and the ways of God. And can we ever be agreed with our Natural enemies? why Malice will ſo pervert their underſtandings, that

that all that we say or do will be misconstrued: and as a man that looks through a red glass thinks all things to be red that he looks upon; so these men through the distemper of their malicious minds, will finde matter of quarrelling with all that we can say or do. Ill will never saith well. Our very obedience to the Law of God, and seeking to save our own souls, will be matter of quarrel, and taken to be our crime. If we will not run into Hell fire with them, and think there is no danger, when we know the contrary, it will be a fault sufficient for their malice to reproach us with: so that if we should Agree with ungodly men, in all our Opinions of Religion; yet if we will not damn our souls, and make no bones of displeasing the great and dreadfull God, there is no Peace to be had with them. They have no Peace with God, and

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they have no solid Peace with themselves(for God hath professed *that there is no peace to the wicked, Isa.*48.22.) And how then can we expect that they should have peace with us? But Sanctification doth beget that effectual Love, that is as healing to a divided Church, or to disagreeing persons, as the most precious Balsom or Wound-salve is to bodily wounds. Love will not let you rest in wrath, but will keep you under smart and disquietness, till you are either at Peace, or have done your part to have procured it: Husband and Wife, Parents and Children, Brethren and Sisters do seldomer fall into greater dissentions then strangers do: And when they do fall out they are easilier reconciled. The Spirit of Grace doth possess unfained Christians, with as dear a love to one another, as is between the neareſt Relations. For by our New birth the Saints are

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Brethren in Christ. If you saw an Army fighting, or a company of people quarrelling and scolding at one another, do you think there could be a readier way to make them all friends and end their quarrels, then to possess them all with a dear and tender love to one another? If it were in my power to cause all contenders to Love those that they contend with as themselves, do you think I should not soon agree them? Why, you know, if you know any thing in Christianity, that Sanctification causeth men to Love their Neighbors as themselves, and to Love one another with *a pure heart fervently*, 1 Pet. 1. 22. For *by this we know that we are passed from death to life, because we love the Brethren: He that loveth not his Brother abideth in death*, Joh. 3, 14. And therefore it is a case exceeding plain, that the readiest way in the world, to reconcile

concile our leſſer differences, is, to be united in the Spirit, and to Agree upon a Holy Life.

11. Moreover, were we all united in the Spirit, *We ſhould have all one God, one Maſter of our Faith, and one Law-giver and Judge of all our Controverſies*: And this would be an exceeding help to unity. The Principal cauſe of Diviſions in the world, are the multitude of Rulers and Maſters and Judges. For with unſanctified men, their own Conceits and Carnal Intereſt is their Counſellor and Judge. The Rulers of the world, that have the power of the ſword, and can do them good or hurt in their eſtates, are the Maſters of their Religion, more then God. They will follow this Man or that Man, that beſt pleaſeth their fancies and fleſhly deſires; and ſo will never be of one minde. But Sanctification takes down all other Maſters of our Faith, ſave

ſave Chriſt and thoſe that declare his will. Let fleſh and blood ſay what it will, let all the world ſay what they will, if God ſay the contrary, his word ſhall ſtand and be a Law to them. And can there be a readier way to Unity, then to bring us all into one School, and ſubject us all to one Lord and Maſter, and to bring us all to refer our differences to one moſt wiſe infallible Judge? Though we do not yet underſtand his will in all things, yet when we underſtand it in the main, and are reſolved to ſearch after the knowledge of the reſt, it is a great preparative to our Agreement, when *we all* look but to *one* for the deciding of our controverſies. Whereas the unſanctified have as many Judges and Guides, as perſons; For every man is a Guid and Judge to himſelf.

12. Moreover, were we but once Agreed in Holineſs, *We ſhould all have*

have one Light for the ending of our differences: and that Light would be the true Infallible Light. For we ſhould all have the ſame Holy word of God as the extrinſick Light, which is moſt True, as cóming from the Lord of Truth: And we ſhould all have the Spirit of Truth within, to teach us the meaning of that word without, and to help our underſtandings, and aſſiſt us in the application, and deſtroy the corruptions that blind us and hinder us from perceiving the Truth: Whereas the unſanctified are all in the Dark: and what wonder, if there they diſagree, and are of many minds! They be not guided by the word and Spirit, and they are ſtrangers to the Light that muſt Reconcile us, if ever we be reconciled. Its true, too true, that the godly are illuminated but in part, and therefore as yet they differ in part. But yet this imperfect illumination,

mination, doth more to a true and safe Agreement, then all the world can do besides. If you would stop your ears against the flesh, & yield all to the teachings of the word and Spirit, we should be sooner agreed.

13. And if we were once United in the Spirit and Holiness, *We should all have the use and benefit of all the Reconciling, Healing means and Ordinances of God, which would be an exceeding great advantage to us.* The unsanctified have but the outside, the sound, and shell of Ordinances; but it is the Sanctified that have the light and life and fruit of them. Every Chapter that you read, and every Sermon that you hear, will do somewhat towards the healing of our breaches: It will further our Knowledge and our Love. The Communion of the Saints in all holy Duties, especially at the Lords Supper, when they par-

partake of one Christ, will enflame their Love, and humble them for their divisions, and soder and glue their hearts together, as being all one bread and one body: And so they will be all as of one heart and soul, *Acts* 4. 32. 1 *Cor.* 10. 16, 17. *Acts* 2.42,43,44,46. When we hear of the tender Love of Christ to his weakest members, how can we choose but love them if we be his Disciples! When we hear how much, and how freely he hath forgiven us, how can we choose but forgive them! *Mat.*18.35. When we have Communion with them in holy worship, as servants of the same Lord, as Members of the same body, how can we choose but have the affections of fellow-Members! 1 *Cor.*12.26. When we joyn with them in Prayer, or holy Conference, and perceive the fragrant odour of their Graces, and the holy breathings of their souls after God,

God, we cannot chooſe but Love Chriſt in them. As the new Commandment ſo frequently preſſed in the Goſpel, is the Law of Love, (*Joh.*15.12,17.) and the New Nature of the Saints is a Diſpoſition of Love (for this they are taught of God effectually, 1 *Theſ.*4.9.) So the Ordinances do all of them exerciſe that Love, and engage us to it. We muſt leave our gift at the Altar, and go firſt and be reconciled to our Brother, if we remember he hath any thing againſt us, *Matth.* 5.23,24. We muſt pray for forgiveneſs, but on condition that we do forgive. Differences and Diviſions that make a breach in Chriſtian Charity, are ſo inſufferable among the Saints, that they long for healing, and ſmart as the wounded body doth, till the time of healing; and are pained as a bone out of joynt, till it be ſet again. And as they cannot bear it themſelves

(when they are themselves) so the Church cannot bear it, but is engaged to watch over them, and to set them in joynt again; so that God hath hedged in his Servants into one holy Society, that they should not straggle from him or from each other, and hath set Pastors over them for this very end, to guide them and keep them in holy Unity, *Ephes.* 4. 11, 12, 13, 14. Now all these Uniting Healing Ordinances are effectual upon the Sanctified: for their hearts are open to them, and their New nature is suited to the new Commandment and work: But to others they are in a manner as Food or Physick to the dead: They hate the power of them; they break the holy Enclosure of Discipline, and proudly Rebel against their Guides: and say, *Let us break their bands, and cast away their cords from us*, Psal. 2. 3. *what must we be Ruled by such and such?* It is but

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the outside of Sacraments, Praises and Prayers that they are acquainted with: and these have no such healing force. So that in this you see the great advantage that we should have for full agreement, if we were but once agreed in the main, and United by the Sanctifying Spirit.

14. Moreover, if once we were United in the Spirit, and in Holyness, *We should manage all our differences in a holy manner, and be awakened and disposed to seek after healing in a healing way.* It would put us upon enquiring after Peace, and studying the meetest terms of Peace, till we had found out the way in which we should accord. The Spirit of Love and Holiness would provoke us, to begin and seek for Peace with those that will not seek to us, and that seem averse to it; and to follow after peace, when it flyeth from us, *Heb.* 12, 14. and

even to lie down at the feet of men, and deny our honour and worldly Intereſt, if it might procure Brotherly love and peace. Whereas a proud unſanctifyed heart will ſcorn to ſtoop, eſpecially to thoſe that are below them, or have wronged them, and will ſcorn to ask forgiveneſs of thoſe that they have wronged! When you have ſhewed them the plaineſt word of God for it, and perſwaded them to it with undeniable reaſons, you loſe your labour, and may almoſt as well perſwade the fire to be cold. If you will ſtoop and humble your ſelf to *him*, and ask *him* forgiveneſs, and give *him* the honour, or change your minde and be of *his* opinion, and ſay as *he* ſaith, and do as *he* would have you, perhaps you may have ſome Peace with the moſt ungodly man. But the ſervants of Chriſt have a ſpirit of Meekneſs and Humility and Self-denyal; and there-

therefore if there be fallings out among them, they can humble themſelves and ſeek for reconciliation. If there be difference in Judgement about any weighty matters, they will go or ſend to one another as Brethren, and confer about it in Love and meekneſs, and ſearch the Scripture, and ſeek after Truth, and compare their evidences, and Pray together for that Light and Love that muſt Reconcile them: If they fall out, they can ſay to one another [*We are Brethren, and muſt not Live at a diſtance, nor ſuffer any wounds in our Affections, or any breach of Charity to remain: The Sun muſt not go down upon our wrath: Come; let us go together in private, and beg of God that he would repair our Love, and reconcile us, and prevent ſuch breaches for the time to come.*] And thus they can pray themſelves friends again. I am perſwaded that

one quarter of an hours fervent Prayer, would do more to quiet our distempered minds, and reconcile us, if thus we would get together in private, then many hours debates without it. Now the Spirit of holiness, is a Spirit of Prayer; and therefore disposeth the servants of Christ, as meekly and lovingly to search for Truth, so earnestly to pray themselves into Agreement.

15. Moreover, were we once United in the Spirit, *We should be under the Promise of Divine assistance, which the unsanctified have no part in.* When we Pray for Light and Peace and Concord, we have a *promise* to be heard and helpt, at least, in the time and measure as shall be fittest; we have a *promise* of the Spirit to be our Teacher, and to lead us into Truth: We have *promises* for the maintaining and repairing of our healing Graces, and

and our Communion-Graces; our Love to Christ and one another; our Patience and Meekness and the rest. And this must needs be a great advantage to Unity and Agreement. For God is partly engaged for it.

16. And if we were United in the Spirit and Agreed in the main, *The Great Truths which we are agreed in would very much direct us, to find out the rest which yet we differ in.* For these have an influence into all the rest; and the rest are all connext to these, and also linkt and knit together, that we may finde out many by the help of one. All holy Truths do befriend each other; but especially the Great and Master points which the rest depend upon, and flow from: There is no way to a right Agreement in other points, but by agreeing first in these Fundamental Rudiments.

17. Also, if we were once A-

greed in Holineſs, *we ſhould have that continually within us and before us, that would much take us off from vain contendings, and from an over-zealous minding of ſmaller things.* We ſhould have ſo much to do with God in holy Duties, and ſo much to do with our own hearts in ſearching them, & watching them, and exciting them, and mending them, reproving and correcting them, ſupporting and comforting them by the application of the Promiſes, that we ſhould have *leſs time* for quarrelling, and *leſs minde* of it then the unſanctifyed have. We ſhould have ſo many great and practical Truths to digeſt and live upon, that leſſer and unneceſſary matters, which are the common cauſes of Contention, would find leſs room: Or at leaſt, we ſhould allow each Truth its due proportion of our ſtudy and talk and zeal: and ſo the leſſer would have com-

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paratively so small a share, and be so exceeding seldom and remissly medled with, that their would be the less danger of Contentions.

18. Yea, if once we were united in the Spirit, *the very forethought of an Everlasting Union in Heaven, would have a continual influence upon our hearts, for the healing of our breaches. We should be thinking with our selves* [*Shall we not shortly be all of one mind and heart! and all be perfected with the blessed vision, and Reconciling Light of the face of God! There will then be no dissention or division, or unbrotherly censures, or separations. And should we now live so unlike our future life! Shall we now be so unlike to what we must be for ever! Shall we now cherish those heart-burnings and dissentions, that must not enter with us into Heaven, but be cast off among the rest of our miseries, and*

ſhut out with the reſt of our enemies, and hated for ever by God and us? Muſt we there be cloſed in perfect Love, and be all imployed in the ſame holy Praiſe of God and our Redeemer; and does it beſeem us now to be cenſuring, contending and ſeparating from each other? Thus the belief of the Life to come, will be a more effectual means with the godly for Agreement, then any that unſanctified men can uſe.

19. Moreover, they that have the Spirit of Holineſs, *have a dear and ſpecial Love to Truth as well as unto Peace.* And therefore they have a great advantage for the receiving of it in all debates: and conſequently they are fairer for a juſt Agreement. They are friends with the moſt ſearching ſpiritual truths: But the ungodly have an enmity to all that Truth that would ſhew them their ſin and miſery and duty, and make them ho-

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ly and lead them up from the creature unto God. And as the Proverb is, *He that would not know, cannot understand.* When you deal with a wicked graceless heart, you do not set Reason against Reason (for if that were all, we should soon have done) but you set Reason against Will and Passion and Appetite and fleshly Interest: and when you have convinced them, you are little the neerer prevailing with them. You may as well think to satisfie a hungry belly with Reasons, or to tame a wild beast with Reasons, or to humble the Proud, and bring the sensual person to self-denial, by all your Reasons. For they *Love* not the Truth, because they Love not the Duty that it would perswade them to, and because they Love the sin that it would take from them. There are two sorts of Satan in a wicked man that none but God can batter,

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ſo as to win them: that is, *A Proud and Ignorant mind*, and *a Hard and ſenſual Heart.* Many a year have I been battering them by the Word of God, from this place, and yetwith many can do no good. But the ſanctified heart that Loveth the Truth will meet it, and welcome it, and thankfully entertain it. *Love* maketh a diligent hearer, and a good ſchollar, and giveth us hope that informations and debates may be ſuccesful. A godly man is ſo far from hating truth and flying from it, that he would give all the riches of the world to purchaſe it: He prayes and reads and ſtudyeth for it: and therefore hath great advantage to attain it.

20. Moreover, if we were all Agreed in Holineſs, and united in the Spirit of Chriſt, *we ſhould Love the Truth in a Practical manner*, and we ſhould know that every Truth

Truth of God hath its proper work to do upon the ſoul; and therefore we ſhould *Love* the end of each Truth, better then the Truth it ſelf. And therefore we could not pretend the *Truth* againſt the *Ends of Truth*. And therefore we ſhould ſee to the ſecurity of thoſe *ends* in all our debates and controverſies. We ſhould not make havock of the Church of Chriſt, nor eaſily be guilty of diviſions, nor quench our Love of God and of our Brethren, under pretence of ſtanding for the Truth; which unſanctified men will eaſily do. *Truth* is *for Holineſs* and *Love* as its proper end. Ungodly men will tread down Love and Holineſs, or at leaſt diſadvantage it and hinder it in the world, for the exalting of their own conceits, under the name of truth. They will cure the Church by cutting it in pieces, or by cutting the throat of it,

it, and are presently dismembering for every sore: But with the godly it is not so.

21. Moreover, the sanctified have a great advantage for Agreement, in that *they have hearts that are subject to the Truth, and will be True to it when they understand it.* Did they but know the right way, they would presently walk in it. Nothing is so dear to them that should not be forsaken for it, or sacrificed to it. But the wicked are false to the Truths which they are acquainted with. They hold it or imprison it in unrighteousness, *Rom.* 1. 18. and therefore is wrath revealed against them. *They like not to retain God in their knowledge*; and therefore God doth oft give them up to a reprobate mind, *Rom.* 1. 28. *They receive not the truth in the love of it that they might be saved:* no wonder therefore if *God give them up to strong*

ſtrong deluſions to believe a lye, that all they might be damned that believed not the truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs, 2 Theſ. 2. 10, 11. *When they know the Judgement of God, that they that do ſuch things are worthy of death; yet they do them and have pleaſure in them that do them*, *Rom.* 1. 32. We may well think that God will ſooner reveal his Truth to them that will obey it, then to them that will but bury it in the dunghil of a corrupted heart: And that he will rather hold the candle to his ſervants that will work by it, then to loyterers that will but play by it; or thieves, or fornicators, that had rather it were put out; or to enemies that would do miſchief by it, and will throw away the candleſticks (the Miniſters) and put the candle into the thatch. Is there not many an ungodly perſon that hears me this day, that is convinced in his conſcience

ſcience that a holy life is beſt, and yet *will not* follow it and obey his conſcience? Are there not convictions at the bottom, that the diligent heavenly Chriſtian whom thou reproacheſt, is in a ſafer condition then thy ſelf? and yet thou wilt not imitate ſuch. Can you expect that God ſhould acquaint ſuch with his truth, that are ſo falſe to it?

22. If we were but all Agreed in true Holineſs, *we ſhould have the great advantage of a tender conſcience, together with an illuminated mind.* For ſpiritual wiſdom, with tenderneſs of conſcience, is a great part of ſanctification. And it is a great advantage in controverſies and debates, to be wiſe and tende-conſcienced: For wiſdom makes men able to diſcern, and a tender conſcience will make them afraid of miſtaking and contradicting the truth: and will keep them from

from raſhneſs, and unadviſedneſs, and levity; ſo that ſuch an one dare not venture ſo eaſily upon new conceits, and will be more ſuſpicious of *himſelf*, and of any thing wherein *himſelf* is much concerned. Eſpecially if he ſee great probabilities againſt it, or the judgment of the Univerſal Church, or of many wiſe and godly men againſt it, and ſee that its like to have ill effects; in all ſuch caſes a godly man will be tender-conſcienced, and therefore cautelous. But is it ſo with the ungodly? no: but clean contrary. None ſo bold as the blind. *Solomons* words deſcribe them exactly, *Prov.* 14. 16. *The fool rageth and is confident.* If he be in an error, or entangled in any evil cauſe or way, you know not what to ſay to him for his recovery. The leſs he knows, the more he deſpiſeth knowledge, and ſets his face againſt his Teachers, as if they

they were but fools to him, and ſcorns to be Ruled by ſuch as they whom God hath made his Rulers. Will you go to diſpute or debate the caſe with one of theſe? why be ſure of it, they will put you down and have the day. It would do a man good to diſpute with a wiſe and learned or ſober rational man, and to be overcome by Reaſon and by Truth: But no man will have ſo ſure a conqueſt againſt you, as he that hath the leaſt of ſenſe or reaſon. He will go away and boaſt that you could not convince him: As if a mad man ſhould boaſt that the Phyſicians could not all of them cure him. An obſtreperous proud ſelfconceited fellow, will never yield to the cleareſt reaſon, nor never be put down. We have a Proverb, that *Ther's no gaping againſt an Oven*, eſpecially if it be hot. If he have paſſion as well as ignorance, and a tongue,

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he will have the beſt. He that ſpeaks nonſence ſayth nothing while he ſeems to ſpeak. Theſe men have the faculty of ſaying nothing an hour or two together in abundance of words. And there's no confuting a man that ſaith nothing. Nonſence is unanſwerable, if there be but enough of it. Who would diſpute againſt a pair of bagpipes, or againſt a company of boyes that whoote at him! If you will make a match at barking or biteing, a curre will be too hard for you: And if you will try your skil or ſtrength at kicking, a horſe will be too hard for you. And if you will contend with multitude of words, or by rage and confidence, a fool will be too hard for you (as you may ſee by *Solomons* deſcriptions and by daily experience) But if you will diſpute by equal ſober Reaſoning, it is only a wiſer man by evidence of Truth that

that can overcome you: And to be thus overcome is better then to conquer: For *you* have the *better* if *Truth* overcome you; and *you* have the *worse* if you overcome the truth.

So that you may easily perceive what an exceeding hindrance to Unity and Peace it is to have to do with ungodly persons, that are blind and proud, and brazen-faced, and of seared consciences, that fear not God, and therefore dare say any thing, as if they could outface the truth, and the God of Truth. But the sanctified have Illuminated minds, and therefore are the more capable of further information; and they have tender consciences, and therefore dare not be unadvised and contentious, and strive against the light; and therefore have great advantage for Agreement.

23. And if all these Advanta-

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ges ſhould not yet ſo far prevail as to bring us up to a full Agreement, yet if we be but united in the Spirit and a Holy life, *we ſhould be the more eaſily able to bear with one another under all our leſſer differences, until the time of full Agreement come.* We ſhould hold our differences (as Brethren their diverſity of ſtatures and complexions, or at leaſt as common human frailties) with Love and compaſſion, and not with hatred and diviſions. We ſhould Lovingly conſult together upon Rules or terms on which we might manage our unavoidable differences, to the leaſt diſadvantage to the cauſe of Chriſt and to the common Truths that we all maintain, and to the work of God for other mens converſion, and to the leaſt advantage to ſin and Satan and the malice of ungodly men. And I think this is a fair Agreement for Imperfect

fect persons, short of Heaven; to have Unity in the Spirit, and Agreement in things of greatest weight, and to bear with one another in smaller matters, and manage our differences with meekness and with Peace.

24. Lastly, If all this be not enough, there is yet more for our encouragement. 1. If we are but once United in the Spirit, and Agree in an Holy heart and life, *we have the infallible promise of God that we shall shortly all arrive in Heaven at the place and state of full perfection, where all our differences will be ended,* and we shall be perfectly Agreed in mind and will, being One in him that is the only Center of Universal Peace and Concord. And its a great comfort to us in our darkness and differences, that we are in the sure and ready way to perfect light and Harmony of mind. 2. Yea and

till

till we do come thither, we are ſtill on the mending hand; and if we do but thrive in Holineſs, we ſhall certainly thrive in Concord and in Peace. And its a comfort to a ſick man, not only to be certain of a full recovery, but to feel himſelf daily on the mending hand.

3. And in the mean time God himſelf will bear with all our differences, though not ſo far as to approve or cheriſh them, yet ſo far as to own us for his children, though we are too often falling out with one another; and ſo far as to pitty our frailty and infirmity, and to pardon us, and deal as a Father with us: And if our quarrels cauſe him to uſe the rod, it is but to keep us in quietneſs afterwards; that as we had the taſte of the four fruits of our contentions, ſo we may after have the quiet fruits of righteouſneſs.

And thus I have given you in four

four and twenty particular discoveries, a sufficient Proof, that *A Unity in the Spirit, and an Agreement in Holiness, hath abundant advantages for our further Agreement in lowers things; and such as all other men are destitute of*; and therefore that there is no way possible for a just, a safe, a durable Agreement, but that we all Agree in a Holy life, and be United in the sanctifying Spirit of Christ.

But perhaps you will Object; *If all this be so, whence comes it to pass that there are so many differences still among those that you call the sanctified? Do we not see that they are more contentious, and divided into partyes, and make more stir about Religion then any others?*

Answ. 1. The differences among the godly, are nothing for number,

number, or greatneſs, or weight, in compariſon of yours. I have ſhewed you in my Diſcourſe of the Catholick Church, twenty great and weighty points in which they all agree together, and in which the ungodly agree not with them. What if they agree not, whether Church-Government ſhould be exerciſed by the Elders only, the flock conſenting; or by all the flock, the Paſtours Guiding? Or whether One among the Paſtours ſhould be of a ſuperior Degree, or of a ſuperior Order, or whether they ſhould only be of the ſame Degree and Order, though choſen to preſide and moderate for the time? What if one think that its Neceſſary to read the publick Prayers out of a Book; and another think its neceſſary to pray without book; and a third more ruly thinks it is in it ſelf indifferent whether it be within book or without?

out? with other ſuchlike differences as theſe, which will keep no man out of Heaven. Are theſe like our differences with ungodly men? Our differences with *you* are, *Whether Heaven or Eath is chiefly to be loved and ſought after? Whether Grace and Holineſs, or ſin and careleſneſs be the better?* whether it be the more ſweet and deſirable life, to be heavenly minded and live in the Love and Service of God, and to be much in holy communion with him, and meditating upon his Law, and upon the Life to come; or on the contrary, to live to the world and to the fleſh? whether it be better to obey the Word of God, and his Miniſters that ſpeak it in his name; or obey our fleſhly deſires and the proud conceits of ignorant minds? In a word, our difference with the ungodly, though they will not confeſs it and ſpeak out, is plainly this,

this, *Whether Heaven or Earth be better? and whether God be God and ſhall be our God? and whether Chriſt be Chriſt and ſhall be our Chriſt? and whether the Holy Ghoſt ſhall be our ſanctifier? or whether we ſhall live after the fleſh and Rule our ſelves, againſt the Will and Word of God?* and ſo in effect, *whether God be God, and man be man? and whether we ſhould live as men or as beaſts? and ſo whether we ſhould chooſe Salvation or Damnation?* If you could but underſtand your ſelves, and the depth of your deceitful hearts, you would ſee that here lyeth the difference. For though ſome of the unſanctified have a fair and plauſible deportment, and will ſpeak handſomly of the Chriſtian Religion, becauſe they have had ingenuous Chriſtian education; yet all this is indeed but little more then formal complement, ſo far are they from a

Heavenly mind and a heart that's truly set on God, as their careless lives, and carnal unsavory conference sheweth, if not their scorns at a state of Holiness. So that our differences are nothing in comparison of the difference with you.

2. Moreover, the servants of God do mind the matters of Religion more seriously then others do; and therefore their differences are brought to light, and made more observable to the world. Their very *heart* is set upon these heavenly things, and therefore they cannot make light of the smallest truth of God; and this may be some occasion of their difference: Whereas the ungodly differ not about Religion, because they have heartily no Religion to to differ about: They trouble not themselves about these matters, because they do not much regard them.

them. And is this a Unity and peace to be desired? I had rather have the discord of the Saints, then such a concord of the wicked. They are so careful about their duty that they are afraid of missing it in the least particular; and this (with their Imperfect light) is the reason of their disputings about these matters. But you that are careless of your duty, can easily agree upon a way of sin, or take any thing that comes next to hand. They honour the Worship of God so much, that they would not have any thing out of order; but you set so little by it, that you will be of the Religion that the King is of, let it be what it will be: And its easy to agree in such an ungodly careless course. Astronomers have many controversies about the positions and motions of the heavens: and all Philosophers have many con-

troverſies about the matter of their Sciences: when ignorant men have none of their controverſies, becauſe they underſtand not, and therefore regard not the things that the learned differ about. And will you think ever the better of Ignorance, or ever the worſe of Learning for this? The controverſies of Lawyers, of Hiſtorians, Chronologers, Geographerr, Phyſicians, and ſuch like, do no never trouble the brains of the ignorant: But forall that, I had rather be in Controverſie with the Learned, then without ſuch controverſie with you. If you ſcatter a handful of Gold or Diamonds in the ſtreet, perhaps *men* will ſcramble for them, and fall out about them, when *ſwine* will trample on them and quietly deſpiſe them, becauſe they do not know their worth: will you therefore think that ſwine are happier

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then men? The *Living* are vext with ſtrifes and controverſies, about almoſt all the matters in the world; when the *dead carkaſſes* in the grave lie ſtill in peace, and are not troubled with any of theſe differences. And will you ſay therefore that the dead corps is happyer then the living? Sirs, the caſe is very plain, if you will ſee, that thus it is as to the matter in hand. It is a Death in ſin, and complyance with the times and carnal Intereſt, and a diſeſteem of ſpiritual holy things, that is the cauſe of the Agreement of the wicked. But the godly know the worth of the things that you ſet light by, and therefore make a greater matter of them then you, and therefore no wonder if they have more debates and controverſies about them.

3. And this alſo is another Reaſon of the difference. It is the In-

tereſt of Satan to Divide the ſervants of Chriſt, but to Keep his own in Unity and Peace: and therefore he will do what he can to accompliſh it. He knows that a Kingdom divided cannot ſtand: And therefore he will do his worſt to Divide Chriſts Kingdom, and to keep his own from being divided. By a deceitful Peace it is that he keeps his ſervants to him. And by caſting among them the matter of contentions and diviſions he hopeth to get Chriſts followers from him. So that the Devil himſelf is the promoter of your Unity and Concord, but the deſtroyer of ours; and therefore no wonder if you have fewer differences.

4. Beſides, the way that ungodly men go in, is ſo ſuited to the common corruption of nature, that it is no wonder if they be all agreed. All the world can agree

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to eat and drink and ſleep: And therefore all the ſenſual ſinners in the world may eaſily agree upon an overloving of meat and drink and ſleep, and ſo of riches and honours and pleaſures. And as its *eaſy*, ſo it is not much deſirable; no more then if you ſhould all agree to caſt your ſelves headlong into the Sea: when every houſe is infected with the Plague, there is an Agreement among them: But had you not rather be one of thoſe that diſagree from them? But to Agree in a holy heavenly life, is contrary to corrupted nature; and therfore no marvail if it be more difficult. When a Phyſician hath an hundred Patients in hand, he may eaſily get them all to Agree to eat and drink that which they deſire: But if he require them to forbear the things that they moſt Love, becauſe they will hurt them, the *underſtanding* ſort will agree to

him, but ſo will not the reſt. In a rotten houſe, the fall of one bearer may occaſion the fall of all the houſe; becauſe their weight inclines them downward: But if you take up one ſtone and caſt it upward, all the reſt of the ſtones in the heap, will not flie upward with it. Its eaſier to draw others with us down hill, then up the hill.

5. And it is conſiderable that the differences among the ſervants of Chriſt, are not alwayes from themſelves, but from the ungodly enemies that contrive their diſſentions, and ſet them together by the ears, that they may fiſh in troubled waters, and the better attain their wicked ends. It is the envious man that ſoweth theſe tares while we are aſleep, and caſteth in this wildfire among us.

6. Moreover, one of the greateſt cauſes of the troubleſome breaches

breaches and diviſions in the Church, is becauſe there are ſo many unſanctified perſons among us, that ſeem to be of us, and to be truly godly, when it is not ſo. You think it is the godly that have theſe diviſions, when the moſt and worſt of all our Diviſions proceed from the ungodly that have an unſound and unrenewed heart, under the cloak of piety and zeal: For if they were truly gracious perſons, they durſt not do as many of them do. 1. They durſt not ſo raſhly and eaſily venture on novelties as they do, without deliberation and reading and hearing what can be ſaid on the other ſide. 2. They durſt not ſo eaſily make a diviſion in the Church of Chriſt. 3. Nor ſo eaſily caſt a ſtumbling-block before the weak; and matter of reproach to our Chriſtian profeſſion before the wicked. 4. Nor durſt they ſo eaſily reproach

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and condemn and cast off the unanimous faithful Ministers of Christ. 5. Nor durst they so easily censure the universal Church in former ages, as many of them do. 6. Nor durst they sacrifice the success and honour of the Gospel and the common acknowledged Truths, and the saving of mens souls thereby, to their private opinions, and ends. 7. Nor durst they make so great a breach in Charity, nor so arrogantly condemne or slight their brethren, whose piety and soberness they cannot deny. These with many other evidences, do let us know that ungodly men crept in among us, are the causes of most of our most dangerous divisions. And will you lay the blame of this upon Religion, which the Devil and the secret enemies of Religion do perform? Its your dishonour and not ours: For these men are of *your* party, though they seem

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to be of us. Satan knows well enough, that if he have not some of his followers to be spies in Christs Army, and to raise mutinies there and betray the rest, he is like to be the more unsuccessful in his attempts, Was *Judas* more a dishonour to Christ, or to the Devil? He was among the followers of Christ indeed; but he told them beforehand of him, that he was a Devil; and he never betrayed Christ till Satan had entered into him.

7. Lastly, the Saints themselves are sanctified but in part, and many in a low degree; and being Imperfect in Holiness, must needs be as Imperfect in holy Unity and Peace It is not their Holiness that causeth their contentions, but the remnants of their sin. And therefore its but small credit to the way of sinners. Were we but perfectly rid of the vices which *you* cherish,

riſh, and perfectly ſeparated from the waies that *you* ſo much delight in, and had we no remnants of *your* diſeaſe and ſinful nature in us, we ſhould then have perfect Unity and Peace. Do you think that its long of our *Religion*, that we diſagree? No: if we were but *perfectly Religious* we ſhould be perfectly agreed. It is becauſe we are Holy in no greater a meaſure, and not becauſe we are Holy at all. It is not becauſe of the way of Godlineſs that we have choſen; but becauſe we walk no faſter, and no more carefully in that way. It is our too oft ſteppiug out of it, and not our walking in it, that breaketh our Peace with God and man, and our own conſciences. Search all the Scripture, and ſee where you can find, that ever God encouraged his ſervants to diviſions. No: but on the contrary he oft and earneſtly cries them down,

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and warneth all his followers to avoid them, and the causers and fomenters of them. There was never Master so much for Unity as Christ, and never was there a Law or a Religion that did so much condemne Divisions, and command brotherly Love, and Peace and concord, and forbearing and forgiving one another, as the Christian Law and Religion doth. And will you yet say that our Divisions are long of our Religion, or of Christ the author of it? You may as wisely say, that eating is the cause of weakness, because that some are weak for all their meat. But you will find that none can live without it. Or you may say as wisely that Physicians are the causes of the diseases of the world, because they do not cure them all. I tell you there is none in all the world that have done so much for Unity and Peace, as Christ

Christ hath done. No: all the world set together have not done half so much for it as he. He hath preached Peace and Unity, forgiving and forbearing and Loving one another, yea Loving our enemies; and he hath gone before us in the perfect practice of what he taught. He hath offered himself a Sacrifice to the Justice of his Father, that by his blood he might reconcile us unto God. He is the great Peacemaker between God and man, between Jews and Gentiles, taking away the enmity, and becoming himself the Head of our Unity; and giving us One Spirit, one faith, one baptism, that we might be One in him who is One with the Father. So that to charge the Center of Unity with our Divisions, and the Prince of Peace himself with our Discords, or his holy Word or waies with our Disagreements, is all one as to charge the

the Sun with Darkneſs, and to ſay that our Law-givers and Laws are the cauſes of theft and murder and Adultery, which condemne them to death that are proved guilty of them. The cauſe of all our diſagreements and diviſions, is, becauſe we are *no more Holy* then we are, and becauſe we are no more Religious. So that I may leave it now as a Proved Truth that we muſt Unite in the Spirit, and Agree in Holineſs of Heart and life, if ever we will have true Unity and Agreement.

AND now Sirs, you have ſeen the only way of Unity opened to you: Its plain and paſt all doubt before you. If yet you will divide from God and his ſervants, and if yet you will be numbered with the ſtraglers or quarrellers, do

do not say but Peace was opened and offered to you. Do not say, *You could not have Peace*, but that *you would not*. Do not say any more hereafter, that there were so many Religions and so many waies that you could not tell which to joyn with! Never more pretend the differences of the godly as a cloak for your ungodliness. I have opened the nakedness of such pretences. You shall not be able when your lives are scan'd, to look God in the face with such an unreasonable impudent pretence. Your consciences and the world shall then be witnesses of your shame; that while you cryed out of Sects and heresies, and were offended at the Divisions of the Church, it was your selves that were the cause of it: It was you and such as you that were the great Dividers; and that obstinately proceeded in your Divisi-

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ons, when the way of Peace was opened to you; and would not be United in the Spirit to Christ, nor would not Agree in Holiness with his Church, when you were acquainted that there was no other way to Peace. Would you but have joyned in a firm and everlasting Covenant to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as your only Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifyer, as members of the Holy Catholick Church, and have lived in the Communion of the Saints, you should have received the Forgiveness of sins, the Resurrection of the just, and Everlasting Life: But in *refusing*, and *obstinate refusing* these, you *refused* all your hopes of *Blessedness*, and wilfully cast your selves on the wrath of God: and therefore must endure it for ever.

The

THE last Advice that I have to give, upon the ground of this Doctrine, is, To all that are United in the Spirit, and Agreed upon an Holy life. I mean to say but little to you now; but briefly to tender you these two requests.

1. I beseech you Christians but to live as Christians, in that holy Unity as your principles and profession do engage you to. Hath true Christianity and Holiness such abundance of advantages against division, and yet will you be guilty of it? Against all these bonds and healing principles and helps, will you be dividers? Doth it not grieve you and even break your hearts, to hear ungodly persons say that Professors are of so many minds and partyes, that they know not which of them to follow? and that

that we had never concord ſince you bore ſway? O do not ſeek by your contentious wayes, to perſwade people that Holineſs is a dividing thing, and that Religion doth but tend to ſet the world together by the eares. Is it not a precious mercy to us of this place, that we have among us but one Church, and one Religion, and and have not Church againſt Church, and Chriſtian againſt Chriſtian! I charge you from the Lord that you be thankful for this benefit; and that you look upon divided places, and compare their caſe with yours, that if ever dividers come amongſt you, the ſenſe of your felicity in this bleſſed Unity may cauſe you to reject them; and that you do not ſuffer any *Dalilah* to rob you of your ſtrength and glory. Were you but once here in pieces among your ſelves, what a ſcorn would you be

to

to all the ungodly? what ſport would it be to them, to hear you diſputing againſt one another, and reproaching and condemning one another, as bitterly as the wicked do reproach you all? Do you not pitty thoſe places where diviſions have made Religion to be a ſcorn, and the tender Love and Unity of the Saints is turned into uncharitable cenſures and ſeparations? Take warning then that you come not to the like. If you ſhould, you would be as unexcuſable as any People in the world, becauſe you have tryed and taſted ſo much of the ſweetneſs and benefits of Unity as you have done: ſhew men by your lives, that Holineſs is the moſt certain way to Unity, as ever you deſire either to propagate Holineſs, or to have any evidence of it in your ſelves.

2. Judge by this undoubted truth, of any doctrine that ſhall be

be offered you, and of the wayes of men and of your ſelves.

1. Suſpect that doctrine that tendeth to diviſions in the Church. If it be not for Unity, it is not of God, *Rom*, 16. 17. Chriſt came to heal and reconcile, and is the Prince of Peace; and therefore ſendeth not his ſervants on a contrary errand. He will juſtifie your dividing from the unbelieving world; but he hateth dividing among his ſervants. He that's for Church-diviſion, is not (in that) for Chriſt or you.

2. What ever holineſs they may pretend to, adhere not to thoſe men, and think not too highly of them that are for Diviſions among the Churches, or ſervants of the Lord. You'l ſee them repent, or come to ſhame and confuſion at the laſt. You flie from Chriſt, if you flie from Unity.

3. Think not that you have any more

more of the Spirit or of Holineſs, than you have of Love to the Unity of the Saints. It is the ſpirit of Satan and not of Chriſt that leadeth you to Church-diviſions: It is a counterfeit Holineſs that maketh yon not deſirous of Unity with all the Saints. If you be not firſt pure and then peaceable, your wiſdom is not from above. As you would all take that man to be an enemy to Holineſs, that is an enemy to Chaſtity, Temperance or common honeſty; So have you reaſon to think of him that is an enemy to the Churches Unity and Peace. Shew that you have the Spirit by the Unity of the Spirit: and ſhew that you are Holy by loving the Union and Communion of the Saints.

Rom-

Rom. 14.1.

Him that is weak in the Faith receive ye, but not to doubtful Disputations.

I Have already proved to you in the foregoing Discourse. 1. That the true Unity of the Church of Christ is a Unity of the Spirit, and that the unsanctified are the causes of our Divisions. 2. That a Unity in meer Profession, is but a low and miserable Unity, which will not satisfie nor serve the turn. 3. That a Unity in the Spirit of Holiness, is a great advantage for the healing of all our lesser differences, or that we may do well for all those differences, if we are truly sanctified. I come now to the fourth and last part of my Discourse, which is to

ſhew you, that *It is not the will of God that the Unity of his Church ſhould conſiſt in things indifferent, or in the ſmaller matters, or in points of doubtfull Diſputation.* To which end I have choſen this Text, in which *Paul* doth purpoſely and plainly lay down this point, in order to the reconciling of a difference that was then among the *Romans*; I ſhall not now ſtand to diſcuſs whether the weak that *Paul* here ſpeaks of, were ſome Chriſtians tainted with a Pythagorean conceit, and guilty of ſome exceſſive Auſterities (which ſome have thought, 1. Becauſe here is no mention of Circumciſion, 2. and becauſe they are ſaid to eat herbs only) or whether it were ſome Converts of the Jews, that ſcrupled the forſaking of their ancient Ceremonies (which is the common and likelier Expoſition.) 1. The perſon here ſpoken of is [*Him that is*

weak

veak in the Faith] that is, who is yet so ignorant in the Doctrine of Faith, as not to know that these Ceremonies are abolished, or these matters are no part of duty, which he placeth duty in; and consequently, who is so weak in Conscience as that he dare not omit the observation of these days and Ceremonies. The Points in which the weakness of these persons is said to be manifested, are, 1. In their abstaining from flesh, and eating herbs, 2. In their observation of certain days as Holy.

2. The thing commanded is, that these persons for all their weakness *be Received*, that is, 1. Into brotherly internal Charity. 2. Into Christian external Communion. For it seems, that by reason of this their weakness, there grew Divisions in the Church. The weak were so self-conceited, as to censure the strong, because they did not observe their

Ceremonies. And the ſtrong were too contemptuous of the weak, and made light of them as a ſuperſtitious people, unfit for their Communion: *Paul* chides them both: the weak for cenſuring the ſtrong, and the ſtrong for contemning the weak: and commandeth that for the future, the weak forbear his *judging*, and the ſtrong *Receive* the weak whom they contemned, and ſo that they joyn in inward Love, and external Communion.

3. And he addeth this caution, for the manner of their reception and behaviour, that it muſt not be [*to doubtfull Diſputations*] either to the cenſuring of one another, or to unſeaſonable uncharitable contendings and diſputes, about theſe ſmaller things. Three things *Paul* ſeemeth to ſuppoſe in the matter of their controverſie. 1. That they were matter of ſome Indifferency.

2. That

2. That they were ſmall, and of loweſt conſideration in Religion. 3. That to the weak they were ſo dark and doubtfull, as to be the matter of Diſputes. But for all theſe, he would have no breach in their Charity or Communion.

One doubt we muſt not overpaſs: And that is, How this will ſtand with what he ſaith in the Epiſtle to the *Galathians*. *Here* he ſaith [*Let not him that eateth deſpiſe him that eateth not: One man eſteemeth one day above another: another eſteemeth every day alike: Let every man be fully perſwaded in his own minde:*] But there he ſaith [*Ye obſerve days and moneths, and times, and years; I am afraid of you, leſt I have beſtowed upon you labour in vain*, Gal.4.10,11.] And of Circumciſion, Gal. 5.2,3. [*Behold I Paul ſay unto you, If ye be Circumciſed, Chriſt ſhall profit you nothing; for I teſtifie again to every*

man that is circumciſed, that he is a debtor to do the whole Law.] For the underſtanding of this you muſt obſerve, 1. That there is a great difference between Circumciſion, and the Ceremonies here ſpoken of. 2. And between the outward act of Circumciſion, and the Sacrament of Circumciſion as appointed by God. 3. And there is a great difference between the uſing it as neceſſary to Juſtification, and the uſing the outward part only for ſome lawfull end. 4. And between the time when the Goſpel was but newly revealed, and the time when it was oft and fully declared to the world. 5. And between thoſe that are ignorant for want of full information, and thoſe that are obſtinate after long inſtruction. 6. And between thoſe that ſcruple the omiſſion of ſuch Ceremonies themſelves; and thoſe that would obtrude them as neceſſary upon others.

thers. Obſerving theſe diſtinctions, you may ſee the difficulty plainly reſolved, as followeth. 1. In this Text, *Rom.* 14. *Paul* ſpeaketh not of Circumciſion, but of meats and days only. For Circumciſion engaged men further to *Moſes* Law, then theſe ſingle Ceremonies. 2. When *Paul* ſaith, he was afraid of the *Galathians*, becauſe of their obſervation of days and weeks, and moneths, he means becauſe they ſtill adhered to the abrogated Law, after ſo long and plain Inſtruction. 3. And though he circumciſed *Timothy*, *Acts* 16.3. and yet ſpeak againſt it, *Gal.* 5.2,3. the difference of the Caſes is exceeding great. For 1. It was but the outward Circumciſion of the fleſh that he uſed with *Timothy* (as with one that did not intend by it any engagement to *Moſes*, or neceſſity of it to Juſtification.) But it was the entire Sacrament of Circumciſion

which was pretended to continue neceſſary, by the falſe Teachers, and which he exhorted the *Galathians* to refuſe. And Circumciſion as a Sacrament, doth ſignifie two principal things. 1. An Engagement to and profeſſion of Faith in the Promiſed Seed, as promiſed and future. 2. An Engagement to *Moſes* Law (for this uſe it had after the Law was given.) Now when Chriſt was come, that man that would ſtill be Circumciſed into, and profeſs to expect a *Meſſiah* yet to come, and that would engage himſelf to that Law, which contained the Types of a future *Meſſiah*, and was but a School-maſter to lead to Chriſt, I ſay that perſon that was thus Circumciſed (as all were that received it according to the inſtitution) did plainly deny, that Chriſt was come, and therefore Chriſt could profit them nothing. But yet a man that uſed but the outward

ſign

ign to avoid an impediment to the Gospel (as *Paul* did in the case of *Timothy*;) or if it were erroneously as a meer Custom, as the Abassines now do, might yet be saved by Christ nevertheless. 2. And when *Paul* used it, it was as an indifferent thing: but he condemned it as supposed necessary. 3. When he used it, it was in the beginning of the publication of the Gospel, that (as *Austin* speaks) he might give the Ceremonies an honourable burial: But when he condemned it, it was after the full Publication of the abolition of the Law, against those that would have raked it out of the grave again. 4. He bore with it in the weak; but he condemned it in the wilfull. 5. He bore with it in those that scrupled the forsaking it as they were Jews: but he condemned it in those that would have laid this yoke as necessary on the Gentiles.

Object. *But it seems here that* Paul *is against the necessary observation of the Lords day, when he is for esteeming all days alike.*

Answ. If you understand the subject of the debate, you will understand his speech. It is only Jewish Holy-days that was the matter in Question, and therefore of these only is he to be understood. As for the Lords day, its plain in the New Testament, that Christ did not only rise upon it, and appear to his Disciples on it, and send down the Holy Ghost upon it; but that the Disciples presently after Christs Resurrection, began their Religious Assemblies on it, and so continued them, by the guidance of the Holy Ghost; and so setled that day for the use of the Holy Assemblies of the Church, calling it the Lords day, *Joh.*21. 19, 26. *Act.*2.1. & 20.7. 1 *Cor.* 16.2. *Rev.*1 10. And it is past all doubt

doubt in the Hiſtory of the Church, that ſince the Apoſtles days till now, the Church hath conſtantly kept this day as thus eſtabliſhed, by the name of the Lords day: which the Fathers called the Chriſtian Sabbath, as they applyed the name of an Altar to the Table, and of a Sacrifice to the Supper of the Lord: ſo that he that will reject the obſervation of the Lords day, muſt take on him to be wiſer then the Holy Ghoſt in the Apoſtles, and then all the Catholick Church of Chriſt, from the beginning, till theſe contentious perſons did ariſe.

The Text being thus explained, the Doctrine before mentioned is plain in it before us, *viz.*

Doctrine. *IT is the will of God that the Unity of the Church ſhould not be laid upon indifferent, ſmall, and doubtfull points: but that*

that true Believers who differ in such things should notwithstanding have inward Charity and outward Communion with one another, not Censuring, nor despising, nor dividing from each other upon this account.

In handling this point I shall briefly shew you, 1. What I mean by *things indifferent*; 2. What I mean by [smaller matters.] 3. What by [doubtfull things or disputations] And then I shall give you the Reasons of it, and then Apply it.

1. For the Explication, 1. By [*things indifferent*] I do not mean [things *hic & nunc*, indifferent in the use] but [things that are not ordinarily in themselves either commanded as Duties, or forbidden as sins, but left as Lawfull or Indifferent by the Scriptures, unless as some accident or circumstance may

may make them to be good or evil.

2. By [*smaller matters*] its none of my intent to perſwade you that any thing that is but an appurtenance to Faith or Piety is *Abſolutely ſmall*: But they are *ſmall* in compariſon of the far greater things, and ſo ſmall that many are ſaved without them, and they are not of flat neceſſity to ſalvation; and the Greater matters muſt be preferred before them.

3. By [*things doubtfull*] I do not mean ſuch as are not certainly revealed in the Scripture, nor yet ſuch as perverſe Heretical men do raiſe doubts about when they are plain in themſelves: But I mean ſuch points as are revealed certainly, but more darkly then the greater points, and therefore cannot be ſo clearly known; ſo that the ſum is this, 1. *Indifferent* things muſt not be taken to be *Neceſſary*, or *ſinful*,

sinful, but to be *indifferent*: 2. *Lower* and *Lesser* points must not be taken to be *Greater* or *Weightier* then they are. 3. Points of *less certainty* that are more *darkly revealed*; must not be taken to be more *clear and certain* to us, then they are. 4. And it is not on such darker smaller matters that God hath laid our salvation; or that the Churches Unity and Peace dependeth.

II. FOr the fuller Demonstration of this, let these Reasons be observed. 1. If our Unity were laid on these smaller matters, the *multitude* of them is such, that we should never Agree in all. The *Essentials* of Christianity are so few that all men may well be expected to learn and know and entertain them. But the *smaller* points are so many that there is no hope

of

of an universal Agreement in them all. You know in the Body of man or Beast, the great Master veins that are the stock of all the rest, are but a few; but follow them further, and you shall have so many Divisions, and sub-divisions, till you find them to be many hundreds or thousands. So is it with the Arteries, and with the Nerves. The Body of a Tree is but one, and the first division perhaps is but into two or three parts; but follow it to the very ends of the branches, and you may find many thousands. So is it in Divinity: And therefore if none should be in Unity with the Church, but those that understand every branch of Christian verity, what hope of Union could there be?

2. Moreover the smaller points are far less discernable then the greater be: and therefore there is the less hope that ever the Church

Chutch ſhould have Unity in theſe. The great armes of a Tree are eaſily diſcerned, when the extremities of the branches are very ſmall. The trunks of the maſter-veins are great and eaſily ſeen, but the points and capillar veins are ſo ſmall, as hardly to be perceived. So God in mercy hath made very plain thoſe few eſſential points of faith that ſalvation lyeth on: but if you follow on theſe generals to all the particulars and appurtenances, you ſhall find them run ſo ſmall as well as ſo many, as that it is impoſſible that Unity ſhould conſiſt in theſe.

3. Furthermore, if our Unity were laid on theſe, Religion would be for none but the learned, and (as the Ancients ordinarily argue againſt the Heathens that cavilled at the plainneſs of the Scripture) God ſhould be then Partial, and ſhould make a way to Heaven that poor men cannot

not go. For the poor cannot poſſibly attain to ſo much Learning, and ſpend ſo much of their lives in ſtudy, as may bring them to the knowledge of all theſe lower difficult points.

4. Yea if our Unity or Salvation lay on theſe, it is certain it would ſhut us out all, both from Unity and Salvation: ſo that there would no two be at Unity in all the world, and no One be ſaved. For all men on earth are Ignorant in many leſſer truths, even ſuch as are revealed to us in the Scripture, and we ſhould endeavour to underſtand. What man dare affirm that he uuderſtandeth every word of the Holy Scripture? Did the Pope himſelf think that he had attained to this Infallibility, he would ere this have written us an infallible Commentary. If the beſt muſt ſay with *Paul* himſelf, *we know but in part*, then ſure thoſe ſmaller doubtful

doubtful things which all the truly ſanctified know not, are not the matter of the Unity of the Church.

5. I have ſhewed in my Diſcourſe of the Catholick Church, that to ſhut out all from the Church and our Communion that differ from us in ſuch lower things, is utterly againſt the deſign of Chriſt, and the tenour of the Goſpel, and very diſhonourable to him and to his Church: God hath more mercy then to ſhut out the weak: and will you diſhonour him ſo far as to perſwade the world, that he hath no ſuch mercy. The deſign of the Goſpel is Grace and Love! How tender was Chriſt even of his little ones that believe in him? How compaſſionate is he to them in their infirmities? And would you go about to perſwade the world that he hath ſo little of this compaſſion, as that he will admit

admit none to Heaven, or to the Communion of his Church but thoſe that attain to Knowledge and Agreement in all theſe leſſer doubtful Controverſies, and indifferent things? The Church is ſmall enough already; but if you would cut off all, that do not Agree in every circumſtance, you would make it ſmall indeed. This is no better, then under pretence of Faith and Unity, to un-Church the Church, and damn your ſelves, and all the world.

6. The Arguments in the Text are very forcible, verſe 3. [*For God hath received him*] As if he ſhould ſay, Dare you deſpiſe or caſt out him that *God receiveth?* ver. 4. *Who art thou that judgeſt another mans ſervant?* ver. 10. *Why doſt thou judge thy brother? or why doſt thou ſet at naught thy brother? we ſhall all ſtand before the judgement ſeat of Chriſt?* The Church

Church doth not censure men for small or doubtful things: nor must we condemn those that God doth not condemn.

7. The laying such stress on smaller things, doth *multiply controversies*, and fill the minds of men with scruples, and ensnare their consciences, and engage men in parties against each other to the certain breach of Charity, and ruine of the Peace of the Church, and of their souls. The fire of Contention will never go out for want of fewel, if unnecessary things be made necessary, and small things pretended to be great, & uncertain things pretended to be certain. Abundance of vice will be daily set and kept at work, upon this borrowed stock.

8. And what a world of *precious Time will be wasted* by this means, while men are Studying and Reading to maintain their own opinions;

nions; and when they must waste their hours when they are together, in Conferences and wrangling-Disputations, to the discomposing of their own and others minds, and certain troubling the Church of God! Oh what use have we for those precious hours, for surer, greater, and more needful things?

9. The things that our salvation and the Churches Peace are *indeed* laid upon, are so *great*, so *necessary*, so *pleasant*, and so *profitable*, that it leaveth us the more without excuse, to waste our time in things unnecessary. We have our great Creator to know and honour: we have the mysterie of Redemption to search into and admire: we have the Nature, and Life, and Death, and Resurrection, and Ascension, and Glorification, and Intercession of Christ to study and believe; and all the Love and Wisdom of God, the Mercy

Mercy, and the Holineſs, and Juſtice that was revealed in him: we have Judgment to prepare for; & all the Graces of the Spirit of Chriſt to be received, or cheriſhed, increaſed and exerciſed in our Souls. We have a Hell to ſcape, and a Heaven to obtain, and the foreſeen glory of it to feed upon, for the ſtrengthning and delighting of our Souls: we have many particular duties of Holineſs and Righteouſneſs to attend: And in the midſt of all this great employment, ſhould we make more work and trouble to our ſelves, and that about unneceſſary things?

10. Theſe unneceſſary or lower things, when once they are advanced above their ranck, do undermine and wrong the greater matters, which they pretended to befriend. They divert the thoughts and ſpeeches from them, and take up the affections, and will not be contented

contented with their due proportion: but are, as the Proverb is, like a Begger on horse-back, that will never light. If men be but set upon Ceremonies, or private opinions of their own, they are upon it in all companies; and you shall sometimes have almost nothing else from them. And that's not all; but the Interest of their unnecessary, or lower points, is ordinarily set up against the Interest of that Body of Christian Verities which we are all agreed in; so that they can be contented that Christianity lose much advantage in the greater points, that their cause may be advantaged. If this were not so, we should not have had ceremonies & formalities have cast out such abundance of excellent Preachers heretofore: Nor private Opinions have set so many against the labours of faithful Ministers, as, to our grief and shame,

ſhame, we have lately ſeen: And the miſchief is, that unneceſſary things made *neceſſary*, do ſo involve the Impoſers intereſt with their own, that they think they are Neceſſitated to drive them on, and ſee their Impoſitions obeyed, or elſe their wiſdom or authority is deſpiſed.

11. And thus they directly lead men to *perſecution*, and occaſion thoſe that muſt needs have their wills, to Lord it over Gods heritage, (1 *Pet.* 5. 3.) when the deſire of being the Churches God, hath prevailed ſo far with any of its members, as to ſet them upon a courſe of Law-giving and domineering, and bringing others into a conformity to their wills; they look upon all men as ſinners that diſobey them, and think that their power will warrant them to force obedience to their commands, or elſe to deprive the Church of her Paſtors.

Pastors. Many a Congregation have I known change Preachers for Ceremonies; when as if Gods Will and Word in *Necessary* things to mens *Salvation*, had but been preferred to the will and word of the Bishops, about things called *Indifferent* by themselves, the case had been altered; and they would rather have let the ignorant have been without a Ceremony then a Sermon. It is the unhappy fate of almost all that are set upon unnecessary things, that they cannot endure that others should have the liberty of differing from them. It is not enough to them to enjoy the freedom of their own Consciences, about meats, or holydaies, or gestures or vestures, or other formalities, unless all others be compelled to do as they do. When they are but moved to comply with others, though plain Scripture and the practice of the Primitive

mitive Cathilick Church be juſtly alledged for it, yet it moveth them little or nothing. But if others will not comply with them, they cry out againſt them as enemies to Unity and Peace; and ſay, It is not fit to ſuffer men to be of ſo many minds and waies. That is, It is fit all ſhould be compelled to do as they would have them.

12. And another miſchief that followeth the making unneceſſary things to be Neceſſary, is, that it openeth a gap to ſo many more of the ſame kind, that no man knows how to ſtop it, nor when we have Ceremonies and inventions enough: But upon the ſame ground that theſe are brought in to day, the next Pope or Biſhop thinks he may bring another to morrow; and ſo we can never tell when we have all, nor when will be an end.

13. And then in the *multitude* of things *unneceſſary*, we ſhall be in

n danger of losing the things that are *necessary*, they will be so buryed or obscured in the crowd: the substance will scarce be perceived for the ceremony.

14. And me thinks it is such height of Pride for mortal men to arrogate such a power, and to desire and endeavour such a thing, that I wonder how they dare attempt it. I mean to make universal or unnecessary Laws for the Church in the matters of faith or worship. Can a man that hath one spark of humility left in him, desire that his will may be a Law to all others, in doubtful or indifferent things? and proceed so far as to desire that none may have Liberty in the Church that are not of his opinion, or will not be ruled by him, in things indifferent or of no necessity! Surely a man of any humility would think with himself, *Am not also imperfect in knowledge? and*

may I not be mistaken? what is my judgement that it should be a Law to the Church, and that I should be so highly conceited and confident of it, as to turn out godly Ministers or people from the Church or worship of God, for not conforming themselves to my opinion in things of such a low indifferent nature! He that would be the Law-giver to the Church, and suffer none but those of his own opinion in such points, would be the Lord of the Church, which can know the voice of none but Christ, and owneth no other Lord but him.

15. And the sin is the greater because they have so little Interest or pretence to lead them to these usurpations: They must have their will though it get them nothing. Who made them Law-givers to the Church of Christ? Cannot they allow Christ this part of the Soveraignty, to make Laws for his Church?

Church? And cannot they be content with a Miniſterial power, to proclaim and promote the Laws of Chriſt, and accordidg to theſe to guide his Church?

16. And hereby men are drawn to a humane kind of Religion: And they do more properly believe, obey and worſhip theſe Impoſers then Jeſus Chriſt: when they muſt fetch the very matter of their Religion, not from the Bible, but the Canons or Decrees of men, their conſcience, obedience and reward will be according thereunto.

17. And hereby the adverſaries of the Church have occaſion to inſult over us, and think our Differences to be more then indeed they are. When the Unity of the Church is laid upon things Indifferent or of ſmaleſt moment, there will preſently be diſagreements, and theſe will be the ene-

mies matter of reproach. It is this that makes the Papists tell us of our differences among our selves, because we have made them seem something to them, when they are next to nothing. *O* say they, *where is your Church of England now*? why! what's the matter? Is the Church of *England* dead? Or is any thing taken down that was essential to the Church of *England*! was a Prelacy ruling by a lay-Chancelor over many hundred Parishes, chosen and Governing without the body of the Clergy, Essential to the Church of *England*? I am confident the most of the sober godly Ministers in *England*, are for the Apostolical primitive Episcopacy still. Was the Book of Canons, or the Book of Common Prayer, or the Ceremonies Essential to the Church of *England*? Sure they were not; And if so, its living still. But if any say that

these

theſe *were* Eſſential to it, we may thank them for the *death* of it, that made it of ſuch a *humane mortal* frame, which any Prince might ſpurn down at his pleaſure. Surely the Church or Churches of Chriſt in *England*, are of a more heavenly durable frame, that may be perſecuted, but hardly deſtroyed, while the men are living, of whom it doth conſiſt.

Hence alſo it is that the Papiſts tell us that we have changed all our worſhip. And wherein? why we have not the ſame Baptiſm that we had; nor the ſame adminiſtration of the Lords Supper, nor the ſame publick Prayer, nor the ſame way of Marrying, Churching, Burying, *&c.* And what's the difference? Is it that we ſay not at every time the very ſame words? why ſo you may as well ſay, that *Paul* was mutable, becauſe he wrot not the ſame words in every one of his

Epiſtles, nor ſpoke not the ſame words in all his Prayers, no not in publick. And ſo both you and we are mutable, becauſe we preach not the ſame words every day in our Sermons. God hath bid us Pray; but he hath preſcribed us no neceſſary form of words, but the Lords Prayer. If the difference be that we uſe not the Common Prayer Book; doth that make a different ſort of worſhip? Is it not the ſame ſort of worſhip if we ſay the ſame words, or words to the ſame ſence, either on the Book or off it? If once men lay the Nature of worſhip and the Unity of the Church upon things unneceſſary, then what changes will ſeem to be in our worſhip, when indeed theres none? Then the Papiſts may tell us of our diviſions in worſhip, becauſe one man ſitteth at the ſinging of Pſalms and another ſtands; and one readeth with ſpectacles and

and another without; and one weareth a cap, and another weareth none; and one preacheth on one Text and another upon another: But be it known to all the Papists in the world, that our Religion is not changed at all: Our worship is the same whether within Book or without. Our Prayers are the same for matter with those in the Common Prayer Book. And if I should one day use the Common Prayer Book, and another day forbear it, I should not change the worship of God. To *pray* is part of his worship: but whether it be *on* a Book or *off* it, is no part at all, but only a *mode*, or *circumstance*, which may be altered as occasion serveth. I doubt not but a Book is fittest for some; but not for all. And do they think that we know not what adding and chopping and changing they have made with their Mass Book? Who

is it then that hath changed *their* worſhip? Is it likethe ſame Book that it was before the changes made by *Gregory* the great? It was ſo ordinary a thing to change the manner and forms of worſhp, that private Biſhops did it without any Synods: whence elſe had the world the forms that are now in uſe? Tell us how many of thoſe in the *Biblioth. Patrum* were made by Apoſtle, or General Council, if you can. When *Baſil* the great had ſet up a new way of ſinging to God, and made ſome other changes in worſhip, the Clergy of *Neoceſarea* were offended with him for the novelty, and told him that none of that was uſed in *Gregory*'s dayes: To whom he anſwers that neither was their own Letany known in *Gregory*'s dayes, (who yet had lived not 140 years before, and was the famous founder of their Church by miracles.)

Baſil

Basil Epist. 63. And *Basil* added to the Clergie of *Neocesara*. [*But how can you tell that these things were not in use in Gregories daies, when you have kept nothing unchanged which he was used to?*] And that you may see his mind in this, he adds [*But I pardon all these things, (though God will examine all:) Only let the principal things be kept safe.*] If we had changed the Sacraments as the Papists have done, *viz.* a *Commemorative* Sacrifice into a *Real* Sacrifice of Christ himself; the *Sacramental* Body and blood of Christ into the *Real* Body and blood; the admi- in stration of it in *both kinds*, into *one kind* alone, defrauding the people of the cup; the *Communion* into a *private Mass*, the people only looking on the Priest, when he receiveth alone himself, *&c.* I say, had we made such changes as these, they might have called us change-

changelings indeed, and have told us of novelties in the worſhip of God.

18. Moreover this laying ſo much upon lower or unneceſſary things, doth impoveriſh the ſoul, and make it low and empty and formal, according to the matter that it hath to work upon. As the great unqueſtionable Truths of God, are they that ſanctifie and elevate the ſoul, and leave their Image on it; ſo will contending about private opinions, or laying out our zeal in ceremonies and ſhaddows, depreſs the ſoul and famiſh it, and turn our Religion into a ſhaddow. We find by ſad experience that people are ſo prone to turn all Religion into meer words and ſhews and cuſtomary formalityes, that when we have done our beſt, we cannot cure them of this mortal ſin: *God is a Spirit, and will have ſuch worſhippers*

pers as worſhip him in ſpirit and in truth, John 4. 23. We have little need to cheriſh this diſeaſe of hypocriſie & ſeeming hiſtrionical outſide Religiouſneſs, when we ſee ſo many periſh by it after all that we can do for their deliverance.

19. And this making a Religion of unneceſſary things, or laying the Churches Unity thereon, is a dangerous ſnare to delude the Ignorant and ungodly, and make them believe that they are godly people, and in the way to Heaven as well as others. I uſe not this or any Argument againſt the profitable uſe of any forms in order to the underſtanding of the matter; nor againſt the due circumſtantiating of the worſhip of God: But if profitable forms, and Gods own Ordinances are ſomwhat lyable to this abuſe, we cannot deviſe how to increaſe the danger, and quite enthral theſe miſerable ſouls more certainly

certainly then by multiplying unneceſſary formalityes, and placing Religion and Unity in them. For they that are moſt ignorant, and empty of the Love and fear of God, and the bittereſt enemies to a Heavenly life, will preſently ſet in with theſe formalities, and make themſelves a Religion of theſe; and then they will take themſelves as godly as the beſt. You ſhall never make them believe that they are ungodly. They think the difference lyeth but in the *way* and *manner* of ſerving God: *You* ſerve him *one way*, and *they another*; but yet they *ſerve him* as well as you: Yea they will *overdo* in theſe *Indifferent* things, that they may make up that which is wanting in true godlineſs; and then they will think that they are better and righter then you. Thus did the Heathens cry out againſt the ancient Chriſtians with a *Tollite impios*, *away with*

with the ungodly; and killed them and cast them to wild beast to be torn by them, because they would not worship their Idols. And so many ungodly wretches now that will not be perswaded to a Holy life, will yet cry down others as impious because they observe not all the Ceremonies which they observe. When we have used all the means we can to bring them to the study of the Scripture, and to meditate in the Law of the Lord, and to holy conference, and fervent prayer; to hatred of sin, the contempt of the world, the mortifying of the flesh, to the Love of God above all, to a thankful admiration of the Love of Christ, and the great mystery of Redemption, to the believing, delightful forethoughts of everlasting life, and preparation for it, *&c.* I say, when we have done all to bring them to this which is godlyness indeed,

deed, we loſe our labour, and leave them as we find them. They cannot away with ſo preciſe a life: But yet a Religion they will have *inſtead* of it, to deceive their ſouls, and quiet them in the way to Hell. For inſtance, I muſt ſpeak it with grief of heart, that I meet with no ſmall number among us that know not who Chriſt is; ſome ſay he is God and not man; ſome ſay, he is man and not God; ſome ſay he was made both God and man at once: ſome ſay he is neither God nor man, but a Spirit: ſome ſay, he is not God, but the Son of God, and hath the power of God given him: Abundance ſay that he is God only and not man, now he is in Heaven, though he was both on earth: and very many know not what Chriſtianity is, nor wherein the Chriſtian Religion doth conſiſt. And yet all theſe perſons, that are Heathens rather then Chriſtians,

ans, are the moſt zealous Keepers of *Chriſtmaſs* (as it is called,) and the bittereſt condemners of thoſe that do not; and ſo do make themſelves believe that they are Chriſtians as well as others. The ſame perſons that know not who Chriſt is, nor what it is to be a Chriſtian, are ſo much for kneeling at the taking of the Lords Supper, that they dare not be ſo unreverent as to ſit or ſtand, but will rather never receive at all: (nor are they fit till they change in a greater matter then the geſture:) And yet, poor ſouls, they think themſelves to be very Religious, and more Reverent then others, and that here lyeth the difference between them. It would grieve the heart of a conſiderate man, to ſee a multitude of miſerable ſinners, to live in wickedneſs, in curſing, ſwearing, drunkenneſs, filthineſs, neglect of God and a holy life, drowned in worldly-

ly-mindedneſs, and as regardleſs of the life to come as if they thought they ſhould die like the beaſts: and even hating thoſe that will not be ungodly as well as they; and yet as hot for Ceremonies, and Holy-days, and kneeling at the Sacrament, and the Common-prayer-Book, as if they were more devout then others: and it ſeems they have made themſelves believe in good earneſt that they are true Chriſtians and Godly men, becauſe in the depth of their ungodlineſs they can make a ſtir againſt thoſe that will not be of their mind, and uſe theſe Ceremonies as well as they.

If any of you ſay, that I am now ſpeaking againſt your opinions or Ceremonies themſelves, as if I could not give you leave to uſe them, you will but ſhew your ſelves miſtaking hearers, and falſe reporters. No, it is the laying too much

much ſtreſs on theſe matters, and making *Indifferent* things ſeem *Neceſſary*, as if Gods Worſhip, or the Unity of the Church lay on them, which I ſpeak againſt: And therefore I muſt needs ſay, that both ſides may be guilty of this ſin: Principally the *Impoſers* of them, that would have all men forc't to do as they do; and next them there may be too much guilt in thoſe that make indifferent things ſeem *evil*, or leſſer evils to be much greater then they are, and ſo would make a Religion of avoiding what others make it their Religion to obſerve. And whether your Religion lie in being *for* or *againſt* theſe points in queſtion (ſuch as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of in my Text) is no great difference: For the Religion of both will prove but a meer ſhadow: yea an over hot oppoſing of ſuch Middle things, doth teach thoſe that are for them

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to believe that they are matters of very great moment, or elſe they think you would not make ſo great a matter of them. And then when *you* have taught them by your fierce oppoſition, to make a *Great matter* of them; and *cuſtom* and their party hath taught them to think their way is beſt; both theſe ſet together do delude their ſouls, and make them think that becauſe of their Formalities, they are godly men, in the depths of their ignorance, ungodlineſs and miſery.

20. Laſtly, obſerve how we ſin againſt the ſad experience of the Church in all Ages, by laying our Religion or Unity upon theſe ſmaller or unneceſſary things. What hath diſtracted the Church ſo much as contendings about their Ceremonies and Orders, and precedency and ſuperiority! Hereſies I know have done their part (eſpecially

ally the *Arrians*:) but ſmaller matters have had two great a hand in it: what plentifull evidence could I give you of this? The lamentable diviſions of the Chriſtian world about *Eaſter* day, which the firſt General Council was fain to meet about and decide, is too ſad an Inſtance. But, alas, the preſent Age it ſelf hath given us too ſad and plenteous proofs of it. By a heap of Ceremonies, and unneceſſary things, the *Roman* Church hath almoſt drownd both the Doctrine, Worſhip and Diſcipline of Chriſt, and miſerably torn the Church in pieces, and ſo continues to do. And what work this miſtake hath made in *England*, I have no minde to tell you, while our ſmart and ſufferings tell you of it more plainly then is fit for me to do. Indifferent things have ſhut out that which was better then Indifferent. Conſider well theſe

twenty

twenty Reasons, and then judge whether *the Religion or Unity* of the Church should be placed in unnecessary things. The imposing of them I shall speak of by it self.

Use. FRom the Text and Doctrine explained and confirmed, we may see these following Consectaries arise.

1. Hence we see the tender mercy of God to them that are sincere in the Faith, though weak. If their understandings be dark, and their judgements in lesser things mistaken, and their Consciences therein erroneous; yet if they be but true Believers, and right in the main, and willing to know the mind of God and to obey it, God would not have them excluded from the Communion of the Saints, but rather received with charity and compassion;

on; and would have the ſtranger bear with their infirmities (*Rom.* 15.1.) He will not himſelf reject them; and therefore he would not have them rejected or deſpiſed by his Servants.

Uſe 2. Hence alſo we may ſee, that God will bear more, and ſo muſt his Church, with ſmaller Errors, then with the uncharitable or dividing management of thoſe errors. Though men ſhould erre about meats or days or ſuch like matters, we muſt yet receive them and love them as Believers: But yet if they will hereupon deſpiſe, or cenſure one another to the breach of Charity, and trouble of the Church, for this they muſt be ſharply rebuked, as *Paul* here doth.

Uſe 3. Hence alſo you may learn, How far men ſhould deſire and

and enjoy a Liberty in matters of Religion, and how far the Magistrate should interpose with force, and how far not. A liberty to live in sin, or to subvert the Gospel, and the souls of others, the Magistrate should give to none: But a Toleration in things of a lower nature, that hazardeth not mens souls, nor the Unity of the Church, should be granted to the weak. Can we be bound with Charity to receive them, and yet to provoke the Magistrate to punish them, and deal severelyer with them then we! This may not be desired.

Use 4. Hence also you may see what an enemy Popery is to the Unity of the Church, and how impossible it is that the Church should have Unity upon their terms: when they have composed a Religion of so many Ceremonies, and unnecessary things, and new devised Articles;

ticles and Sacraments; and none must be a Catholick Christian with them that will not be of this Religion, and vow or practise all their Novelties. So far are they from practising the Doctrine of my Text, that they set themselves in opposition to it, and place their Religion and the Unity of their Church in such things as *Paul* here requireth us not so much as to judge one another in; or in worse then these. A Catholick Unity is impossible on their terms.

Use 5. To conclude, I advise all that are unfeigned friends to the Unity of the Church, to practise the wholsom Doctrine of this Text. If you have Zeal, there's sin enough in your selves and others to lay it out upon: *Bear not* with *Infidelity, Sensuality, Impenitency* or any ungodly course. If men be not so

much as weak Believers, and *seem* not Saints at leaſt of the lower form, receive not theſe into your Communion; but leave them under your common compaſſionate charity. If you can prove that God receiveth them not, then do not you Receive them. But as you are Chriſtians, take heed of cutting off or deſpiſing the Members of Chriſt; and of giving a Bill of divorce to any ſoul that is truly eſpouſed to him: You have Drunkards, and Railers, and notorious ungodly ones enough to exerciſe all your Zeal, if you joyn both head and heart and hand againſt them: And can you find in your hearts to fall upon one another for indifferent things, or ſmaller matters, which the Unity of the Church doth not conſiſt in? I ſpeak to both ſides impartially; and I beſeech you ſo underſtand me. What if thy weak

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Brother *pray upon a Book*, dareſt thou therefore *deſpiſe* him? and what if thy Brother *pray without Book*, dareſt thou therefore judge him? Nay dareſt thou deſire that none but ſuch ſhould have liberty to Preach or Worſhip in the Church? What if thy weak Brother dare not receive the Sacrament unleſs he Kneel in the act of receiving it? dareſt thou therefore deſpiſe him? And what if thy Brother on the other ſide, do rather take it in another geſture, becauſe he is ſure that Chriſt and his Apoſtles ſinned not in ſo doing, and becauſe he finds that our Kneeling is contrary to the practice of the ancient Church (yea *ad hominem*, I may ſay) contrary to General Councils, yea to the laſt Canon of the firſt General Council it ſelf, which even the Canoniſts ſay that no Provincial Council, or Biſhops can repeal

(with many other reasons;) dare you therefore judge him, because he dare not imitate you rather then Christ and his Apostles, and the Primitive Church for many hundred years? If any imagine that I go against this necessary Toleration my self, because all here receive the Sacrament sitting; I answer, Let them prove that ever I refused one person meerly because they would take it Kneeling, if they can. If you say, Why then are not all admitted to take it Kneeling? I answer, Soft and fair; There are greater matters then Kneeling in the way. Do but first let go your vicious courses, and agree with us in a holy life, & turn unfeignedly to God, and live in the Church Order that he hath plainly commanded; and then, if I cannot give you satisfaction, you shall have liberty to take it in the gesture that you desire, sobeit you will grant.

grant me my liberty as I grant you yours.

One instance more, To morrow is the day called *Christmass* day, and many days called Holy days do follow it; If you will but Read and Mark this Chapter, *Rom.* 14. I am perswaded it may prevent a great deal of sin, that many of you on both sides may be guilty of. Is it not a wonder that after so large and plain a decision by the Holy Ghost, as here you find, there should yet be any controversie among us about this Case? Do you take the word of God for your Rule or not? If you do, why then doth it not Rule you, and end the difference? Do you not read the Apostles words, *ver.* 14. [*One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike: Let every man be fully perswaded in his*

own mind.] If you were Papists that would say the Scripture is obscure, and therefore you must have a General Council, you could scarce devise how a Council should speak more plain then this. But nothing will serve some men, but their own wills. Dare you on the one side, despise your weak Brother now for esteeming these days above the rest? Why perhaps it is to God that he esteemeth it: and the ancient custom of the Church, and practice of many godly persons, do perswade him that it is right: And dare you on the other side condemn or reproach them that make not this difference of days as you do? If we are contented that you have your Liberty (which truly I would not deprive you of, if it were in my power) cannot you be contented that we have ours? There are three opinions about these Ho-

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ly days. 1. Some think the observance of them a necessary Religious Duty. 2. Some think the very outward observance to be an intolerable sin. 3. Some know that both these extreams are erroneous, and therefore they take the thing in it self to be indifferent, but as circumstances or accidents may make it Good or Evil: And these are in the right. They that are in the Middle can bear with others, but the other cannot bear with them, nor with each other. There is no proof that ever I saw, that the Church observed any of these days, of many hundred years after Christ. For the *Clement*, the *Dionysius*, the *Cyprian* that are cited for it, are known to be spurious. And it is unlikely that none of these would have been mentioned as well as the Lords day, if they had been then observed, when

there was so much ado about the time of *Easter* day. Yea it is certain that of divers hundred years after Christ, it was not agreed on, which was the day of Christs Nativity; some thought it was on *January* 6. and therefore called it the *Epiphany*, or Appearance: And of old both the birth day and Circumcision of Christ were supposed to be on that same day, that is, on the sixth of *January*. *Cassianus* witnesseth that the *Egyptians* were of that mind: *Collat. l.* 10. *c.* 11. And *Epiphanius* witnesseth the same of the Greek and Asian and Syrian Churches. *Epiphanius* himself and *Nazianzen*, and many others were of this mind, that it was on *January* 6. and that thence it was called the *Epiphanie*. And *Chrysostom in Hom. in Natal. Dom.* tells us that it was but ten years before he wrote it, that the

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Romans had perſwaded the Church of *Conſtantinople* to change the day to *December* 25. And yet the Countryes about *Jeruſalem* held to the 6. of *January*, as *Cauſabon* hath ſhewed, *Exercit.* 2. *cap.* 4. *p.* 170, 171. & *cap.* 11. *p.* 186, 187. Yea indeed the Day of Chriſts Nativity is *yet* unknown, as if God had kept us ignorant of purpoſe: Many very learned men, as *Broughton*, *Helvicus*, *Scaliger*, *Beroaldus*, think that the day was about *Autumn* in the beginning of *October*: *Calviſius*, *Paræus*, and many more are for other times then *December* 25. and *Jac. Cappellus* and many others ſtill go the old way for *January* 6. And *Th. Lydiat* out of *Clem. Alexandr.* is for *May* 20. *Scultetus*, *Clopenburgius* and many others do ſhew that indeed the time is utterly uncertain. And no wonder if the

day be uncertain when the very *year* is so uncertain, that there is no probability of ever comeing to a full agreement about it amorg the Learned in Chronologie till the last comeing of Christ agree them! Our late most Learned Chronologer (Bishop *Usher*) was confident that we were about four years too late in our common account, as in his Annals may be seen. And what man can reveal the things that God hath purposely concealed? For my part, I dare not judge men for keeping or not keeping such daies as these. But if any will make it a *necessary* thing to the *Universal* Church, I must resist that usurpation; as *Paul* that had Circumcised *Timothy*, did cry down circumcision when some would have obtruded it as a necessary thing. And for this I have an Argument that sustaineth my Religion it self:

even

even the ſufficiency of the Holy Scripture. If this be not the Law of God, then farewel Chriſtianity: If it be his Law, it is ſufficient in its kind, and to its ends, which is 1. To determine of all things that were then fit to be determined of: 2. And to determine of all that the Univerſal Church in all times after muſt be bound to. There is no Univerſal Law-giver but Chriſt. If this day be of Neceſſity, it *was* ſo *then* as well as *now*, and it *is* ſo to *one* Country as well as *another*: for there is the ſame reaſon for it in one age and place as in another. And therefore if Scripture be not a ſufficient Rule for Univerſal Duties of Religion, then we are utterly at a loſs; and as Popery will come firſt in, ſo Infidelity is likely to come next. I doubt not but *pro re natu*, upon emergent occaſions,

sions, Church-Governours may appoint Religious Anniversary solemnities. For the occasion of these being 1. To some one place or Province only: 2. And not existent in Scripture times; it did not belong to the Universal Law to determine of them. But in cases that equally belong to the Universal Church, and where the Reason and occasion was existent in the Apostles daies as well as now, if *there* we have not their determination, no others can come after them and make it universally *Necessary*. And indeed neither General Councils nor Apostolick Tradition can be pleaded for the Necessity. And sure I am that the one day in seven, even the Lords-day, of his own appointment, which the Universal Church hath constantly observed, is a Festival for the commemoration of the *whole work*

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of Redemption, and therefore of the *Birth* of Christ, though especially of the *Resurrection*: And therefore we are not without a Day for this use.

I speak not all this to condemne any that use these daies; but to excuse those that use them not, and by telling you a few of those many reasons which they have to give for themselves, to perswade you both to lay by the opinion of Necessity, and to forbear condemning those that differ from you, and be content that *they* have *their* liberty, as we are freely content that you have yours; and Lay not the *Unity* and *Peace* of the Church upon such things as these, when the Holy Ghost hath so plainly decided the case. And I could heartily wish that the Lords own day were not most wilfully neglected by

by many that are moſt forward for other Holy-daies. Its a fearful ſelf-deluſion of ungodly people that no means can bring them to a New, a Holy and Heavenly life; and yet they will make themſelves believe that they are Religious, by pleading for forms, and dayes and ceremonies. Alaſs poor ſoul, if thy eyes were but opened, thou wouldſt ſee that thou haſt other kind of matters firſt to look after! It would grieve one to hear a man contending for Kneeling and Holy-dayes, and Prayer-books, that is in a ſtate of unregeneracy, and a ſtranger to ſanctification, and under the dominion of his ſins, and under the curſe and wrath of God. Get firſt a new and holy Nature; make ſure of the pardon of ſin, and of Peace with God, and then the diſcourſe of lower matters will be more ſeaſonable and more ſavoury.

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Is it not a ſhameful ſelf-condemning to keep Holy-dayes for the dead Saints, and to hate and rail againſt the Living? Do you know what kind of men thoſe were that are called *Saints*, and Holy-dayes were kept in remembrance of them? They were ſuch as thoſe that now are hated by the world, and took the courſe in a holy and diligent care of their ſalvation, as theſe do, and therefore were hated by the world, as the godly now are; and when wicked men had put them to death, the godly that ſurvived would keep a day in remembrance of their Martyrdom, to encourage others to conſtancy for Chriſt. And alſo becauſe the unruly multitude were ſo ſet upon their pleaſure, that they kept the Idols feſtivals for their ſport ſake; therefore ſome Paſtors of the Church did think it better to

let

let them have Festivals for the Saints to take their pleasure in, to turn them off from the Idols festivals. So *Gregory Nyssen* tells us of *Gregory Thaumaturgus* in his Oration of his life, that he made Holy-dayes for his neighbours of *Neocesareà*, when the *Roman* fury had Martyred many; and he used this as a pious wile to draw the licencious Vulgar from the Idols festivals, by letting them play on the Martyrs dayes, till they could be drawn up to a holy observation of them. Whether the course were right or wrong, by this you may see the Original of such dayes. And *Gregory* the great of *Rome*, would for this very end, have all the Heathens Festivals turned into Christian Festivals. But if any of you will hate a Saint, and refuse the Communion of Saints, and will not imitate them in Holiness,

and

and yet will keep Holy-dayes for them that are dead, Christ himself hath given you your doom, *Matth.* 23. 29, 30, 31, 32, 33. which I desire you to read.

Well Sirs, I have said enough, if enough will serve, to prove that the Unity of the Church must not be laid on things Indifferent, nor upon low or doubtful points; but it must be a Unity in the Spirit of Sanctification. It is in the few, the great, the certain and the Necessary points, that we must all agree in if ever we will agree, and compassionately tolerate the differences that are tolerable.

If after all this, there be any so Proud, and selfish, and ungodly, and unmerciful, that they will set up their own Conceits and Wills against the plain Commands of God,

God, the long and ſad experience of the world, and againſt the Peace of their Brethren, and the Unity of the Church, and will have no Agreement unleſs all others will be conformed to their Wills, I ſhall now ſay no more to ſuch, but that Theſe are not the ſons of Peace, nor the living compaſſionate members of the Church, but ſelf-idolizers that God is engaged to pull down: And it is not by ſuch as theſe that the Church muſt be healed and repaired: But it is by them that are ſenſible of their own infirmities, and compaſſionate to others, that are of a Chriſtian Catholick Spirit, and have Catholick Principles and Affections, and ſee ſuch a beauty in the Image of Chriſt, that they can heartily Love a gracious perſon, notwithſtanding his many tolerable infirmities, and think themſelves more unworthy

unworthy to be tolerated by others, then such as I have described to be tolerated by them.

Preached December 24. 1657.

FINIS.